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ABSTRACT

The causes and manifestations of gender inequalities in education in Malawi, Zambia, and Zimbabwe and policy options for redressing them were examined through a review of literature on the causes, nature, and extent of gender disparities in education in the study region and information on efforts to eliminate gender inequality. Special attention was paid to the following: manifestations of gender inequality (educational expenditure patterns, enrollments, performance/attainment, literacy); factors shaping gender inequalities (economic constraints; girls' labor contributions; family, community, and social class; school-based factors); policy options (expanding educational provision, types of school provision and organization, school inputs, community involvement/awareness, improving girls' health and nutrition, recruiting more female teachers, reducing direct and indirect costs); priorities in adult education and literacy; and government and aid donor interventions at the country, regional, and continent levels. It was concluded that, despite wide acceptance by most governments and donors in Sub-Saharan Africa of the considerable private and social benefits of girls' education, the political will to promote educational programs for girls and women appears to be lacking. Appropriate government- and donor-supported nonformal education for women was deemed ess[redacted]ial. (Contains 81 references and project terms of reference.) (MN)

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REDRESSING GENDER INEQUALITIES IN EDUCATION

A REVIEW OF CONSTRAINTS AND PRIORITIES IN MALAWI, ZAMBIA AND ZIMBABWE

COMMISSIONED BY:

THE BRITISH DEVELOPMENT DIVISION IN CENTRAL AFRICA (BDDCA)

OF THE

OVERSEAS DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION (ODA)

BY

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	
1.1 Background	3
1.2 Structure	3
1.3 Limitations	3
CHAPTER 2: THE OVERALL BENEFITS OF FEMALE EDUCATION	
2.1 Introduction	4
2.2 The importance of female participation in education	4
CHAPTER 3: MANIFESTATIONS OF GENDER INEQUALITY IN EDUCATION: MALAWI, ZAMBIA AND ZIMBABWE	
3.1 Educational expenditure patterns	7
3.2 Enrolments	8
3.3 Performance and attainment	11
3.4 Literacy	15
CHAPTER 4: FACTORS SHAPING GENDER INEQUALITIES IN EDUCATION	
4.1 Economic constraints	17
4.1.1 Women's labour market participation	18
4.2 Girls' labour contributions	19
4.3 Family, community and social class	20
4.3.1 Parental attitudes and influence	21
4.3.2 Initiation and early marriage	23
4.3.3 Sexuality and sexual harassment	25
4.4 School-based factors	27
4.4.1 Girls and the school environment	27
4.4.2 Teachers: expectations and attitudes	28
4.4.3 Single sex schools	31
CHAPTER 5: POLICY OPTIONS: AN OVERVIEW	
5.1 Introduction	36
5.2 Expanding educational provision	36
5.3 Type of school provision and organisation	37
5.4 School inputs	38
5.4.1 Maths and science	38
5.5 Community involvement and awareness	39
5.6 Improving girls' health and nutrition	39
5.7 Recruiting more female teachers	40
5.8 Reducing direct costs	41
5.8.1 Scholarship programmes	41
5.9 Reducing indirect costs	43

CHAPTER 6: GENDER AND ADULT EDUCATION: A MISSING PRIORITY

6.1 The role of NGOs 44
6.2 Adult education and literacy 45
6.3 Lok Jumbish - Rajistan 46
6.4 Bundibugyo-Uganda 49
6.5 Lessons for Southern Africa 51

CHAPTER 7: GOVERNMENT AND DONOR INTERVENTIONS

7.1 Introduction 53
7.2 Malawi 54
7.2.1 The GABLE Project 54
7.2.2 The Malawi Primary Community Schools Project (ODA) 56
7.3 Zambia 57
7.4 Zimbabwe 59
7.5 Regional and continent-wide donor initiatives 61
7.5.1 UNICEF 61
7.5.2 The Forum of African Women Educationalists (FAWE) 62
7.5.3 The Donors to African Education (DAE) 64

CONCLUSION 65

CHAPTER 8: RESEARCH PRIORITIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 Research priorities 67
8.2 Policy Recommendations 67
8.2.1 School Based 67
8.2.2 Community Based 68

REFERENCES 69

TABLES

1 Public Current Expenditure Per Pupil
1a Total Public Expenditure on Education As a Percentage of Government and GNP
2 Total Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER)
2a Gap between Male and Female GER (Primary)
2b Gap between Male and Female GER (Secondary)
3 Primary Enrolment
3a Secondary Enrolment
4 Tertiary Enrolment
5 Adult Literacy Rates
6 Women's Labour Force Participation (numbers and percentages)
7a Numbers of Teachers
7b Percentage of Female Teachers in Primary and Secondary

ANNEX 1: PROJECT TERMS OF REFERENCES

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

This report was commissioned by the British Development Division in Central Africa (BDDCA) of the Overseas Development Administration (ODA). The consultant, Dr. Nicola Swainson, was requested to conduct a literature review of policy and other interventions that have been developed to address the constraints against girls' access and persistence within the education systems of the BDDCA region. The BDDCA area covers four countries: Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe. However, because there is very little reliable information and research on the education sector in Mozambique, this country has not been included. The objective of this project is to provide the BDDCA with information and analyses that will assist them in designing and implementing effective gender strategies in order to improve educational outcomes for girls.

1.2 Structure

The report is divided into two parts. The first part contains the following three chapters: (1) An examination of the international evidence concerning the benefits of female education; (2) A review of the literature that outlines the nature and extent of gender disparities in education in the BDDCA region; and (3) An overview of the main factors which have shaped gender inequalities in education. The second part of the report consists of four chapters (5-8) that focus on strategies to promote the education of both girls and women. It assesses the impact of policies and other interventions employed in Africa and highlights particular initiatives which could be effectively replicated in the Southern African context. The report is completed by a list of research priorities and recommendations for BDDCA.

1.3 Limitations

As this report is primarily a desk study, most information was obtained from specialist libraries, in particular those at the Institute of Development Studies and the School of Education at Sussex University, Brighton. Other information was obtained through personal contacts. This report reviews a large amount of literature on gender and education, but it cannot pretend to be fully comprehensive given the time allocated (30 days) for the consultancy. More work was done on the report in order to revise it for publication. There is a shortage of good quality school-based primary research in all three countries. More recent enrolment figures are also needed for all BDDCA countries, broken down by sex, grade and region. The information on interventions by governments and donors is selective, the intention being to focus on those which offer the greatest possible relevance to the situation in Southern Africa.

CHAPTER 2

THE OVERALL BENEFITS OF FEMALE EDUCATION

2.1 Introduction

One of the most enduring types of educational inequality is that of gender. At a global level, the gender gap in education has been reduced significantly in many of the countries of the North although it remains extreme in parts of the South, particularly in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). South Asia has the largest gender gap at both the primary and secondary levels followed by SSA.

In the poorest countries of the world, gender inequality is reflected in lower enrolment, attainment and achievement, and higher wastage rates for girls. While SSA has the lowest levels of education as a region, it has, nonetheless, made the most progress in increasing schooling for girls and women over the past three decades (UNESCO, 1993). Thus, the enrolment of girls has increased at a faster rate than that of boys although starting from a much lower base level. This is largely the consequence of the expansionary education policies followed by post-independence African governments. Even so, gender inequalities with respect to enrolment levels and educational outcomes are still very marked both in absolute terms and in relation to other developing countries. During the 1980s, two-thirds of primary school-aged African children who were out of school were female (Colclough, 1994). While it is true that the enrolment gap between boys and girls has diminished in many SSA countries at the primary level, the education of women and girls remains highly inequitable, particularly at the tertiary level.

Generally speaking, economic recession and structural adjustment policies (SAPs) have over the past decade deepened social and gender inequalities in African societies. Widespread concerns have been expressed about the adverse impacts of SAPs on education sectors mainly in terms of declining overall enrolments for both males and females and deteriorating quality of provision at all levels. Due to the multiple political, social and economic constraints operating against females in SSA, deteriorating economic conditions have had a particularly damaging effect on the education and employment prospects of women and girls (Elson, 1994).

2.2 The importance of female participation in education

The very considerable private and social benefits arising from the education of girls are now well documented (see, for example, Floro and Wolf, 1990, King and Hill, 1991, Herz et al, 1991). The level of women's education affects economic productivity, child health and welfare, and influences the length of time daughters are sent to school. As schooling tends to improve the mother's knowledge and use of health practices, each additional year of schooling is estimated to decrease the child mortality rate (Hartnett and Heneveld, 1994). Research reported in two World Development reports (See

IBRD 1989 and 1992) confirms that female education reduces fertility, especially where family planning services are available. Female education is linked with later marriage, lower fertility, desire for smaller families, and increased practice of contraception. The relationship is stronger as women's education increases (see Herz et al, 1991).

There also seems to be a strong link in rural areas of SSA between education of women and agricultural productivity although this has not been adequately researched. In the rural areas of Ghana (where currently three-quarters of female farmers have no education), lack of female education limits farm productivity. Inadequate literacy and numeracy skills are also reported to affect adversely the efficiency of women traders (BRIDGE, Ghana,1994). Another study on Ghana finds that maternal education is the main influence on children's schooling, whether for boys or girls. But the effect on girls is twice as great - with respect to both girls' actual enrolment and the probability that girls will continue to the next grade (Herz et al, 1991).

The positive impact of maternal influence on schooling has been found right across the developing world in different cultural settings. Studies conducted in Latin America indicate that parent's income and own years of schooling have a strong positive impact on children's education with the mothers' educational level appearing to have a greater impact (Bustillo, 1989). An ILO study on vocational training in Zambia (Kane, 1990) also shows that well educated women are more likely to educate their daughters.

The influence of mothers on their children's education is particularly important in the African context where in many countries a relatively high proportion of households have a female head. This includes many of the countries of Southern Africa where male migration is widespread. Many women are the prime movers with respect to their children's education and their own levels of education and command over resources are important factors in their ability to send children to school (Fuller et al, 1994). In rural Botswana where 48% of households have a female head, it has been found that investment in a daughter's schooling is higher for those households. A recent household survey in Botswana also found that the mother's literacy levels and reading practices were closely related to their daughters' level of school attainment (ibid).

Research has shown that both the social and private rates of return to girls' primary education are generally high. For this reason, King and Hill (1993) recommend that governments should invest in basic education for girls in both formal and non-formal settings. Recent World Bank studies have suggested that returns to secondary education for girls and boys are now comparable to those for primary (Herz et al, 1991). However, rates of return estimates for SSA countries should be treated with caution since the data and/or the methodology used in many country studies are seriously flawed (see Bennell, 1995).

Due to the undoubtedly positive impacts of female education, a somewhat instrumentalist view has emerged from the World Bank and some other aid donors regarding gender and education. Primary education is now seen as a particularly 'good investment' both generally and from a gender perspective. However, the factors militating against the education of African girls cover political, social and economic factors. While it is important that the economic and social benefits are highlighted, the key issue remains one of equity, namely that education must be recognised as a basic human right. Furthermore, it is important that women are not merely the 'objects' of policy but rather that they themselves become part of the process of transformation of not only education but social attitudes. Thus, investing in girl's education cannot be a 'quick fix' solution to economic and social problems, since any kind of progressive change will need to involve a long term process of political empowerment as well.

CHAPTER 3

MANIFESTATIONS OF GENDER INEQUALITY IN EDUCATION: MALAWI, ZAMBIA AND ZIMBABWE.

Any kind of statistical analysis of gender inequalities in education in SSA is hampered by seriously inadequate and often inaccurate information. Consistency and comparability in the data are poor and it is hard to find reliable figures for all African countries after 1990 (Hartnett and Heneveld, 1993). However, it is easier to find data at the country level. There is currently a move on the part of the Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE) to encourage SSA governments to improve their collection of educational statistics from a gender perspective. This will assist in providing background data to inform potential gender and education policies.

3.1 Educational expenditure patterns

Any analysis of enrolment patterns must be placed in the context of government spending on education, and the differential spending between primary, secondary and tertiary educational levels. As elsewhere in SSA, the education policies of the three countries under consideration have been severely affected by financial stringency in the 1990s.

Primary: In 1990, Zimbabwe spent approximately eight times more (in US dollar terms) on each primary pupil than either Zambia or Malawi (see Table 1). Zimbabwe's expenditure per pupil was at its highest in 1980, fell in 1985 but then rose again in 1990 (although not reaching the 1980 figure). However, Zimbabwe since 1990-1991 has seen a reduction in real per capita government expenditure of 32% while government spending on secondary and higher education has fallen but not as fast (Chisvo, 1994). Malawi's expenditure per primary pupil fell slightly during the 1980s and was only $15 in 1990. Since 1991, however, Malawi has been involved in a major expansion of the primary education sub-sector which renders this disparity less extreme. Due to deep financial cuts, spending on primary pupils in Zambia fell consistently throughout the 1980s, so that by 1990 it spent only $16 per pupil, about half the 1985 figure and the same as Malawi. Primary education in Zambia has borne the brunt of recent reductions in education expenditure, while spending on tertiary education has been maintained and even increased (Kelly, 1994).

Secondary: While the differences between the three countries with respect to public expenditure per secondary school student are not so marked as at the primary level, they are still relatively large. In 1990, Malawi spent $41 and Zambia $95 per student, far less than the $233 per pupil in Zimbabwe. Moreover, the drop in spending per secondary school pupil between 1985 and 1990 was not nearly so drastic in Zimbabwe as it was in Malawi and Zambia (see Table 1).

Tertiary: In Zimbabwe, real expenditure per tertiary-level student almost doubled between 1970 and 1980, but during the 1980s, expenditure per student fell by more than half, so that by 1990 it had the lowest per capita tertiary expenditure of the three countries, the highest being Malawi at $1782 per student. It should, however, be borne in mind that Malawi has a much smaller proportion of the relevant age cohort attending tertiary institutions than Zambia and Zimbabwe. In both Zambia and Zimbabwe, as we have seen, the cutbacks in expenditure on the tertiary sector have not been severe. In Zimbabwe, real per capita spending on higher education declined by only 4% between 1990/91 and 1993/4 (Chisvo, 1994). This seems curious given the prioritisation of many aid donors, (notably the World Bank) of primary education while pruning expenditure at the tertiary level.

Total government expenditure on education: Educational expenditure expressed as a percentage of GNP was nearly four times higher in Zimbabwe in 1990 than in Malawi and Zambia. Zimbabwe's expenditure on education as a proportion of both government expenditure and GNP rose consistently between 1970 and 1990. On the other hand, public expenditure on education in Malawi as a percentage of total government expenditure and GNP has remained consistently low. Zambia has experienced the largest fall in education as a proportion of government expenditure and GNP between 1985 and 1990 (see Table 1a). Real spending on education stands at less than half what it was in 1984 and by 1994 education accounted for only 2.5% of the GNP (Kelly, 1994)

3.2 Enrolments

Primary: Both primary and secondary schooling have expanded phenomenally since independence in Zimbabwe, which consequently has high gross enrolment ratios (GER). In contrast, GERs in Malawi for both primary and secondary education (at 69% and 3.9% respectively) were the lowest for 1990 (see Table 2). However, primary school enrolments in Malawi are now expanding very rapidly as a result of the new policies introduced by the democratic government (which was elected in May 1994). In particular, primary education was made free in October 1994. Between July and September 1994, over one million new children were pre-registered and 19,000 new teachers recruited. In October 1994, with over three million children estimated to be in primary school, the GER was 132% (38% of the projected enrolment was in Standard 1 and from all ages). The new policy increases access to education but poses severe problems of quality delivery, particularly in the light of a substantial shortage of fully trained teachers and classrooms (ODA, Malawi Primary Community Schools Project, 1994). In a way, this situation is a replay of the conditions facing the education sector in Zambia and Zimbabwe after their rapid expansion of primary and secondary schooling in the 1970s and 1980s respectively.

The problems of access to primary education have largely been overcome in Zimbabwe. Each of the three countries now has nearly equality of overall enrolments between girls and boys at primary school (see Table 3). By

1992/3, girls in Malawi made up 51% of enrolments in Standard 1 but in Standard 8 their share had dropped to 35% , mainly because of relatively high drop out rates among girls in the lower grades of primary (GABLE, 1995). In the senior grades of primary school, there is a greater propensity for boys to repeat years in order to increase their chance of gaining entry to secondary school (Zeitlyn, 1994). However, Malawi admits a much smaller proportion of students of the relevant cohort to secondary school and the average transition rate from Standard 8 to Form 1 is approximately 8% (in 1992) with the transition rate being higher for girls than boys although boys do have higher scores than girls on the Primary School Leaving Exam (Hyde and Kadzamira, 1994).

Primary and secondary school enrolments also grew rapidly in Zambia during the 1980s but this expansion was not properly resourced. As a result, the quality of educational provision declined dramatically. For example, in the early 1990s there were only 20,000 classrooms for 1.5 million primary school pupils and some large schools ran three or four sessions a day (IBRD, 1992). The gender gap in primary enrolment does seem to have narrowed in Zambia in recent years, with girls as a proportion of the total number increasing from 47% in 1987 to 49% in 1992. Similarly, improvements in girls' enrolment were made in Standard 7 where the proportion of girls rose from 43% in 1987 to 48% by 1992 (Maimbolwa-Sinyangwe, 1994).

The rather favourable overall primary school enrolment ratios for all three countries at the national level mask severe regional inequalities in both the quality and quantity of educational provision. Available evidence suggests that early drop-out and wastage is considerably higher in remote rural areas than in urban and peri-urban areas. In the large scale farming areas of Zimbabwe, due to various logistical and household constraints, the drop out rates for children are three times the national average for eight year olds and five times the national average for 11 year olds. Worse still, the rate of drop out for girls is estimated to be on average three times greater than that of boys over all the age categories (Nyagura, 1995). These particularly high drop out rates are due mainly to the strong demand for child labour to support households.

There are also large differences between rural and urban areas in Zambia. In rural areas the GER is 69% while in urban areas it is 100.8%. In both rural and urban areas, however, the net enrolment rates for girls are almost identical with those of boys (Kelly, 1994). In the provinces with the highest levels of poverty: Eastern, Northern, North-West and Western have the lowest GER and the highest drop out rates (UNICEFb, 1995).

Regional variations in enrolment are also significant in Malawi; in the northern region in 1990/91, 80.8% of eligible children attended primary school whereas in the less developed south only 45.5% attended (Hyde, 1992). Policy makers concerned with equity of provision and gender inequalities need to focus their attention on these disadvantaged rural areas.

In Zambia and Zimbabwe, much higher proportions of students are admitted to secondary school than in Malawi, with GERs for 1990 of 21.3%, 50.0%, and 3.9% respectively. The primary drop out rates in both Zimbabwe and Zambia are only a little higher for girls than boys. For example, in Zimbabwe the primary drop out rate for the 1985-1992 cohort was 28% for boys and 29% for girls, although the proportion of Grade 7 enrolment moving on to Form I was 73% for boys but only 64% for girls in 1992 (UNICEF, 1994). A similar level of drop out of girls occurs between 'O' level and 'A' level. In Zimbabwe, it would appear that primary school completion rates are deteriorating for both sexes but to a greater extent for girls (UNICEF, 1994). Ministry of Education Statistics show that through grades 1-7 more girls are dropping out than boys (UNICEFb, 1995).

Secondary: The secondary and tertiary education sectors in Malawi are relatively very small. Only 31,000 students were enrolled at secondary schools in 1990 compared with 672,000 in Zimbabwe and 195,000 in Zambia (see Table 3a). Secondary education GERs were 3.9% in Malawi and 50.0% in Zimbabwe in 1990. Despite the rapid expansion of provision, primary education is still considered to be terminal for most Malawians.

Table 3a shows that in both Malawi and Zambia, the proportion of girls attending secondary school increased steadily during the 1980s. In Zimbabwe, this proportion fell from 42% in 1980 to 40% in 1985 but rose again to 46% in 1990. The rate of expansion of secondary schooling in Zimbabwe during the 1980s decade was phenomenal; primary school enrolments in Zimbabwe increased three times while secondary school enrolments increased tenfold. This expansion as well as the abolition of tuition fees at primary level benefitted both girls and boys (Gordon, 1993).

In Malawi, the average transition rate from Standard 8 (primary) to Form 1 is currently 8%. In Malawi's mixed secondary schools, boys outnumber girls by approximately three to one (secondary school places are reserved for girls). Approximately the same ratios prevail in Zimbabwe and Zambia. Even though there was a slight improvement in the proportion of girls in secondary grades 8 to 12 in Zambia between 1980 and 1989 (i.e. from 35.1% to 38.7%), the drop in the proportion of girls attending grades 8 (41.2%) and 12 (33.9%) in 1989 remains significant (IBRD, 1992, Annex 1a). For those Zambian girls who do manage to secure places at the secondary level, most of them are channelled into non-technical disciplines and traditionally female subjects such as home economics and social sciences. Boys, on the other hand, are encouraged to study technical subjects similar to those offered in the boys only technical high schools which existed up until 1993 (Republic of Zambia, 1995). As indicated earlier, the overall figures for primary and secondary enrolment disguise the progressively lower participation of girls in the upper grades.

Tertiary: The tertiary education sector in Zimbabwe is the largest with 49,400 students in 1990. Enrolments grew particularly rapidly between 1980 and 1985. In contrast, in Malawi and Zambia, enrolments stagnated in the early

1980s but increased, especially between 1985 and 1990 (see Table 4). However, during the 1990s, enrolments in all three countries have remained fairly static given the financial stringency facing governments and the prioritisation of primary education by donors.

Despite the fact that university entry requirements for girls are lower than for boys in Zimbabwe and Zambia, access to tertiary education is even more limited for girls than at the secondary level. In 1990, the proportion of female university students were as follows: Malawi (24%), Zambia (28%), and Zimbabwe (27%) (see Table 4). In the 1992/93 academic year, female students accounted for only 19.3% of total enrolment (Kelly, 1994). However, overall enrolment figures at tertiary mask the high concentrations of female students in teaching, arts and humanities. In 1990, females comprised only 24% of science students in Malawi and 8% in Zambia (DAE, 1994). In Zimbabwe, this figure was an incredible 1% although by 1993 female student enrolments in science had risen to 20% (Sibanda, CAMFED Conference, 1995). The particularly low enrolments of women in science subjects is the consequence of a gendered subject specialisation as early as primary and lower secondary school. This means that by the end of secondary few girls have the requisite entry qualifications to study science or vocational subjects such as engineering or medicine.

What is particularly apparent is that the gender gap in enrolments between boys and girls becomes progressively more pronounced from the end of primary up to tertiary in all three countries. Although very little data are available for the past few years, it seems likely that SAPs have had a negative impact on the numbers enrolled at primary, secondary and tertiary sectors (particularly in rural areas) in both Zambia and Zimbabwe. It is clear that primary GERs in Zimbabwe and more particularly, Zambia dropped between 1985 and 1990 (DAE, 1994 and Kelly, 1994). More research is certainly needed in this area. In the light of present financial stringency, educational expansion has slowed considerably in Zimbabwe and more particularly, in Zambia. Malawi could also find its current expansion programme curtailed as a consequence of its present financial difficulties.

3.3 Performance and attainment

The mean educational attainment of girls in SSA is low because enrolment is low compared with boys and wastage is high (Hyde, 1993). While it is well known that girls' educational attainments are, in aggregate terms, considerably lower than for boys in SSA, this is not easy to document for many African countries. Adequate records of school-based performance by sex are not kept on a consistent basis for all schools in many countries. However, some research has been conducted on exam performance in Zimbabwe, Malawi and Zambia. Enrolment figures by grade can also give an indication of the stage at which girls drop out of the school system although it is not possible with the present data to determine the reasons for their departure.

Wastage includes both grade repetitions and drop outs. The reasons for wastage are complex and will be explored more fully in the next section. Statistical information about drop outs and exam performance can help illustrate the problem of gender inequality. Detailed classroom based research is needed to illuminate the precise nature of the attainment difficulties faced by girls.

In all three countries, girls perform worse in all examined subjects except local languages and, in the case of Zambia, English. Primary school leaving exams are a way of screening out those with weaker academic grades. Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe all have leaving exams at the end of primary and the pattern of girls' performance is consistently worse that of boys in most subjects. A situation which is then repeated at the end of secondary school for those girls who have made it that far.

Zimbabwe: Up until 1993, drop out rates for girls in every age cohort were higher than for boys (Gordon, 1993). Since then, however, the drop out rates for the primary grades have been similar for both girls and boys (UNICEF, 1994). In 1991, the Ministry of Education in collaboration with the International Institute of Education Planning (IIEP) found no difference in achievement levels between boys and girls at the primary school level (MEC, 1994). However, in the same year, Riddell and Nyagura carried out a study of academic achievement among boys and girls in secondary school and found that girls' achievement was significantly lower than boys, particularly for maths. They recommended that more observational studies were needed in order address this deep seated problem through improved teaching practices (Nyagura and Riddell, 1991).

In Zimbabwe, primary school completion rates declined for both boys and girls between 1985 and 1993, although girls tended to drop out in larger numbers than boys at all the transition points in the school system (UNICEF, 1994). The poorer performance of girls through the school system is reflected in 'O' level results from Zimbabwean secondary schools. It should be pointed out that these examinations are the potential passport to the job market or higher education and are, therefore, ferociously competitive. The overall 'O' level pass rate in Zimbabwe has declined as school enrolments have increased. In 1986 and 1987, 15% of boys but only 7% of girls passed five or more subjects to earn a Cambridge School Certificate. The performance of boys in individual subjects was better than that of girls with the exception of three areas: the vernacular language, physics and chemistry. However, girls did not do well in maths and other science subjects (Dorsey,1989). It is clear that since 1980 girls have consistently performed worse than boys in the 'O' level exams (Gordon, 1993).

In a sample of secondary schools in Zimbabwe, Bennell compared different groups of children in terms of their performance in the 'O' level examinations and their job market experience. He observed that among the 1985 group of Form IV school leavers, 31% of the males and 15% of the females passed more than 5 'O' levels whereas the corresponding pass rates for the

corresponding 1988 group were 19.9% and 8.6% respectively. This decline in performance for both sexes was put down to the deteriorating quality of provision (Bennell, 1994). Due to the importance attached to certification, a high proportion of students retake their 'O' levels (between 15-20% of the school leavers surveyed by Bennell). In 1993, only 5% of girls as opposed to 16% of boys obtained 5 passes or more (UNICEF, 1994). Thus, it would appear that the performance of girls in the crucial 'O' level exam seems to have deteriorated still further vis-à-vis boys during the 1990s.

In the November 1992 'O' level exams, there were 103,753 male candidates and 76,678 female candidates (42.5% of the total). Apart from Shona and Ndebele, in all subjects taken by more than 2000 candidates, boys did significantly better that girls. For most subjects, the male pass rate was, in fact, double or three times the rate for girls. These disparities in examination performance are puzzling because the girls who reach Form 4 are more highly selected than comparable boys (IBRD 1992a). Possible reasons for this poor performance are the negative attitudes of teachers and the hostile learning environment in secondary schools for girls.

Depressingly, Bennell and Ncube's research on Zimbabwean school leavers using two cohorts in the 1980s, shows that even among the best qualified school leavers with 5 or more 'O' levels, 71.8% of the 1985 male school leavers were in wage employment by early 1991 compared to only 52.9% of their female counterparts (Bennell and Ncube, 1994). Gender segregated job markets and prejudice against women entering traditionally male preserves make access to well paid employment difficult even for those girls who do overcome the hurdle of formal schooling. Labour market prospects undoubtedly influence the decision of parents to send their daughters to school and to keep them there. According to recent research, girls who leave the education system are much less likely than boys to find their way back into either formal or non-formal education systems (UNICEF, 1994).

Malawi: A similar pattern of poor achievement and low persistence for girls can be found in both primary and secondary schools in Malawi. Throughout the school system, girl's performance lags behind that of boys. Girls are more likely to repeat a grade in primary school (except in Standard 8 where the reverse is true) and pass rates for girls are lower than those of boys. In the primary school leaving examinations, girls do worse than boys in all subjects examined (Kadzamira, 1994).

Several studies in the 1980s on sex differences in academic achievement and exam performance (at primary and junior secondary level) have revealed that sex differences in maths and science exist from primary school onwards. Boys outperformed girls in the Malawi School Certificate of Education exam in geography, history and English although girls outperformed boys in Bible Knowledge and Chichewa (Kadzamira, 1987 and 1988). Furthermore, fewer girls than boys obtained passes with distinctions and credits in English, maths and physical science.

There is evidence to suggest that girl's academic performance has not improved in Malawi since the early 1980s. in fact, for maths and science the gap between girls and boys' examination performance actually widened during the 1980s (Mwanza, 1990). Despite fluctuations, the difference between the pass rates of girls and boys at the JCE exam increased from 24.2% in 1985 to 28.3% in 1989 (Hyde, 1992). Some studies have attempted to analyse exam results by type of school i.e. single sex or mixed. The results usually indicate that girls in single sex schools generally perform better than girls in mixed schools (Kadzamira, 1987 and Hiddleston, 1991). Although nearly half of the girls taking MSCE exams attended mixed secondary schools, over 70% of the girls entering Chancellor College come from single sex schools. Despite this improvement in performance for girls in single sex schools, their pass rates are still 10% lower than boys at single sex schools and 5% lower than boys in mixed schools (Hyde, 1992).

Girls' performance in maths and science is particularly problematic in both primary and secondary schools. However, Hiddleston's study undertaken in 1991 of undergraduate girls from single sex schools taking maths and science at Chancellor College (University of Malawi) indicates that girls moved from being below average in their first year to above average in their fourth year even though they had poorer scores on entering college (Hiddleston, 1994). Similar observations have been made in Kenya. This change in the pattern of girls' performance in maths and science is significant and the learning environment at university should be closely examined. More research is needed generally on how pedagogical practices affect girls and women in different contexts.

Zambia: There appears to have been little systematic research on learning achievements in primary schools in Zambia and apparently the country does not have any good indicators of learning achievement (Kelly, 1994). In all of the six papers of the primary school leaving exam the mean scores for boys are higher than those of girls and the difference is greatest in social sciences and maths (ILO, 1990). At Grade 9 the overall picture is of weak performance for both girls and boys although there is a significant gender gap with only one-third of girls getting a full certificate compared with half of all boys. The performance of girls in the end of primary exams has deteriorated in recent years whereas the performance of boys remains unchanged (Kelly, 1994). Very similar patterns of poor female retention and performance would appear to exist in Zambia as in Zimbabwe and Malawi. Thus, girls fail more frequently and do worse than boys in every exam at primary and secondary level except for English literature in the school leaving exam (ILO, 1990)

A higher proportion of girls drop out at all levels than boys, although the drop out rate at the higher grades is more pronounced. Information on the progression of one cohort from 1978-1989 shows a sharp fall off for both boys and girls after grade 7, with the gap between boys and girls widening from grade two onwards (IBRD, 1992). Of those who enter grade 1, only 11% of boys and 3.8% of girls complete grade 12 which is the end of the secondary cycle (Ibid). The highest repetition rates occur at standard 9 where

pupils take an examination to qualify for further studies at higher grades. Repetition rates at secondary level ranged from 2% in the Central Province to 6.7% in the Western Province in 1994 (Republic of Zambia, 1995). For all the years between 1980 and 1992, completion rates for girls are lower than those for boys, sometimes by more than 25 percentage points (Kelly, 1994).

A major programme of gender research in Zambia that includes surveys of the factors contributing to gender inequalities in education is currently underway as part of the World Bank's ongoing Education Rehabilitation Project (IBRD, 1992). This should be of considerable assistance in pinpointing more precisely the reasons for girl's low attainment throughout the schooling system.

3.4. Literacy

A key indicator of the success of past educational policies and practices is the rate of literacy for the population as a whole and women in particular. Zimbabwe and Zambia present a very similar picture: overall literacy rates in 1990 were 66.9% in Zimbabwe and 72.8% in Zambia and female literacy rates were 60.3% and 65.3% respectively (UNDP, 1993, UNESCO, 1993). Kelly stresses that the relatively high adult literacy rate in Zambia is a considerable achievement given the level of under-resourcing of the schools over the last two decades (although he cautions that the female literacy rate of 72% for 1990 from the Census could well be an over-estimate (Kelly, 1994)). In contrast to Zambia and Zimbabwe, the literacy rates in Malawi are among the lowest in SSA with a very large gender gap: the female literacy rate was estimated at 17.7% in 1990, less than half the rate of males (see table 5). These figures for Malawi are an indication of the very low rates of education spending in the past and consequent inadequacy of both formal and non-formal education provision. They highlight the need not only for the building up of primary education but also the development of an efficient, community based adult education system.

As in the case of enrolment ratios, there are huge differences in literacy rates in all three countries between urban and rural, with the more remote rural areas registering much higher rates of illiteracy. In Zambia, for example, according to the 1990 Census, the percentage of persons aged 15 and above who cannot read and write is 55% and 21.5% for rural and urban females and 32.5% and 9.2% for rural and urban males respectively. The disparity between male and female is larger in rural than urban areas which reflects the better male access to schooling and employment opportunities.

Evidence from Zambia shows a strong inverse relationship between school completion rates and female illiteracy: where illiteracy rates are high, the proportion of girls who complete primary school is low and vice versa. Apparently the culture of formal education is absent in most rural areas of Zambia (Kelly, 1994). The positive impact of maternal literacy will be explored further in Chapter 6.

CHAPTER 4

FACTORS SHAPING GENDER INEQUALITIES IN EDUCATION

Equality of access is often seen as being the crucial factor affecting girl's education. But, from the experience of many SSA countries, including Zimbabwe, Zambia and Malawi, it is clear that persistence and attainment in the upper primary grades and at the secondary level is also a major problem for girls. Evidence from these three countries shows that boys and girls are enrolled almost at parity for primary school as a whole and yet educational outcomes for girls are still relatively poor. Even in Zimbabwe, where educational provision has expanded dramatically since independence, girls have been unable to fulfil their potential. The really crucial question is, therefore, the degree to which there is equality of process in the education system.

Only a few studies have tried to address the factors affecting the poor educational performance of girls in Malawi, Zimbabwe and Zambia. Until the current World Bank initiative (involving the University of Zambia) reports its findings, Zambia appears to have the least amount of published research on the process of gender inequality in education particularly at a more detailed, school based-level. The various factors which have been found to adversely affect the successful participation of girls in relation to boys in the education system apply at every level. The constraints operating against girls are often divided into school-based and non-school based factors and they are multicausal, spanning a wide range of social, economic and political factors.

While the division between school-based and non-school based influences on girls' participation is often used for analytical convenience, it should not obscure the fact that inequalities stem from gender relations in society at large and these are reflected in and played out in the school system itself. While there has been considerable debate about the relative importance of school and non-school factors in the educational achievement of girls, no firm conclusions have been reached. In a large survey of Kenyan primary schools in 1994, Appleton concludes that school level variables appear less important for girls than boys in relation to student level variables. Using econometric modelling techniques, he found that girls were less responsive than boys to school level variables such as the quality of teaching staff (Appleton, 1994:78). The most plausible explanation is that the school is replicating the values of the home and community in terms of undervaluing girl's potential and abilities compared to boys. In his view, such attitudes might have the effect of inhibiting girls, making them psychologically distanced from schooling and therefore less sensitive to school conditions.

In marked contrast, Hyde stresses the importance of focusing on the institutional and pedagogical effects of school based changes in Malawi. Her research shows that a student's perceptions of encouragement and support from teachers can contribute significantly to the academic performance of females (Hyde, 1994). The positive results of the Cambridge Federation for

Educational Development (CAMFED) project in Zimbabwe to support girls' through secondary school would also seem to support this supposition. A study of girls' achievement in Botswana's junior secondary schools suggests another possibility, namely that where family and community context strongly influence children's length of school attendance and their level of achievement, little effect would be expected from the school itself (Fuller et al, 1994). However, what seems to be happening is that the school simply reinforces gender differentials already set up in the household. What needs to be explored, therefore, is the juxtaposition of household, community and school. Gender relations are formed and expressed in all these areas. Limiting the discussion to 'supply and demand' factors is too simplistic to capture the process of gender inequality.

The following sections will outline some of the factors in the economy, school, community and household which affect the educational opportunities and achievements of females.

4.1 Economic constraints

Research on Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe shows that one of the main reasons for low female participation and high drop out rates are economic constraints which have increased both the direct and indirect costs of education for girls and their parents. Education cost recovery and cost reduction measures have been in place in Zimbabwe since the 1990s and were imposed earlier in Zambia. In Zimbabwe, urban primary school fees were introduced in January 1992. Although some safety nets have been created (based mainly on the Social Development Fund), the real challenge is whether these can be implemented and targeted effectively (Chisvo,1993). The introduction of school fees and the real cost of sitting international exams (due to devaluation) have raised the overall cost of education whilst real incomes are concornitantly being erode by recession. In Zambia, which has suffered massive declines in spending on social sectors in response to persistent economic crisis, a recent poverty assessment (1994) showed a strong correlation between primary school attendance and household poverty levels (Republic of Zambia,1995).

The public sector employs a disproportionate number of women in the formal sector. Public expenditure cutbacks, therefore, can be seen as a particular threat for women on two fronts: school places are jeopardised and employment opportunities for those who attend school are reduced, a situation that will further lower the economic returns to education for women (Hyde, 1989). In Africa, devaluations which have been introduced as part of SAPs have been associated with sharp, often extreme falls in the value of salaries in the public sector, including those of school teachers (Colclough with Lewin, 1993). In particular, the real value of civil servants salaries has fallen precipitously in Zimbabwe and Zambia. During the 1990s, the employment of teachers in both primary and secondary schools in Zimbabwe has declined, with a growing number of male teachers seeking better paid jobs elsewhere. They are rarely replaced because of tight budgetary

conditions (Chisvo, 1993). Consequently, higher pupil to teacher ratios have contributed to the declining quality of schooling. Although it is difficult to relate conclusively changes in social sector expenditure under adjustment to shifts in health and educational status of the population, evidence of increased poverty in these countries would suggest that to be the case.

4.1.1 Women's labour market participation

A major constraint against the participation of girls in education is the real and perceived lack of labour market opportunities. It is generally recognised that boys have a wider range of choice with regard to jobs due to labour market segregation even in a context of shrinking formal sector markets. Females comprise between 15-20% of total wage employment in Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe (see Table 6). Time series data available for Malawi and Zimbabwe suggest that there was a slight upward trend in this share during the 1980s. In Zambia, on the other hand, the fragmentary data for the period 1980-86 indicate that the proportion of total formal sector employment accounted for by women fell from 24.5% to 16.1% in 1986.

With very sluggish and, in recent years, probably negative growth in wage employment in all three countries, the employment prospects for female school leavers remain as limited as ever. In Malawi, annual job openings for females, (i.e. replacements to make up for attrition and new jobs) have averaged no more than 10-15,000 during the last five years, which is no more than 1.5-2.0% of total female primary school enrolment. The corresponding guesstimates for Zambia and Zimbabwe are 0.5-1.0% and 1.0-1.5% respectively.

Given intense job competition, only graduates from higher education institutions and upper secondary school leavers stand any chance of eventually obtaining some type of skilled job in all three countries. So long as job prospects for all youth remain so grim, the vast majority of primary and lower secondary school leavers will continue to be absorbed in farm and non-farm household production in the rural areas and the urban informal sector. The policy implications are equally clear. Given that monetary benefits from education investments will continue to remain very low for the foreseeable future and the overall incidence of poverty is unlikely to decrease markedly, only a radical reduction in the overall costs of female education will encourage more parents to send their daughters to school. To achieve this, governments must certainly minimise the direct costs of schooling, but, with indirect (i.e. opportunity) costs typically comprising well over half of the total (household) costs of female schooling, higher levels of financial support along with other interventions may be necessary. However, with governments being forced to slash public expenditures, the ability to pay for the required policy measures is very limited.

4.2 Girls' labour contributions

If household incomes are declining, the real cost of education as a proportion of household income increases, which is likely to exacerbate drop-out rates for both male and female children. However, at the intra-household level there are often biases in the allocation of resources that stem from prevailing gender relations. Research in SSA has shown that parents are often more inclined to send their boys to school in the first place and keep them there longer, mainly because of the better labour market prospects for boys compared with girls (Davidson and Kanyuka, 1992). There are additional 'hidden costs' to parents of educating girls given the considerably greater inputs of domestic labour contributed to the household by girls than boys.

Female domestic labour is a key factor that militates against girls' achievement at school and is also a very sizeable opportunity cost for parents when they make a choice about whether to send a child to school. In other words, the need for female domestic labour affects decisions about whether to send a daughter to school in the first place and, once at school, how long she should stay. Not only do women in SSA undertake the major tasks in agricultural production, they also perform tasks associated with biological and social reproduction such as pregnancy, cooking, caring for the young, sick and old and all service work to sustain households (Mbilinyi et al, 1991). Furthermore, in many rural areas of Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe, high proportions of households are headed by women who are the sole income earners. In Zimbabwe, for example, 30-35% of households are headed by women (UNICEF, 1994). The task of economic and social reproduction of the household, therefore, falls heavily on women.

In Ghana, recorded time burdens are up to 20% higher for females than males across many age groups and occupational status (Haddad, 1991). Girls attend school more infrequently and less intensively and that they are not given the same kind of attention by teachers as boys and they take less demanding subjects. These household tasks performed by girls and women are not remunerated and they detract from commitments to education and income generating activities (Haddad, 1991).

An important issue is that conventional measures of opportunity cost based on prevailing wage rates for children may seriously undervalue the real opportunity costs to parents of children (and girls in particular) attending school. This may explain why parental demand for the education of daughters is so much lower than would appear to exist given the allegedly very high private rates of return to primary and secondary education in SSA (see Psacharopoulos,1994). Generally, parents attach a much higher value to female labour than that of boys but prevailing wages do not generally reflect this (Ilon, 1992). Whilst virtually all boys and girls participate to some extent in all household activities, gender differences in this participation are substantial. In Zimbabwe, both girls and boys in rural areas spend an average of about 5 hours per week of labour more than their urban counterparts. Girls

work an average of 25 hours per week (i.e. the equivalent of a half time job in industrialised countries) which is 7 hours a week more than boys. Similarly, a study in Malawi reports that girls spend 30 minutes per hour of the day on domestic chores whereas boys spend only 12 minutes (GABLE, 1995). The picture of girls' labour being valued more highly than that of boys is fairly universal across the Central and Southern Africa, except in areas (as in rural Botswana) where boys herd cattle. In these situations, girl's enrolment at primary school usually outnumbers boys substantially. And, in poorer households there tends to be a greater demand for domestic labour from girl children. Conversely, in higher socio-economic groups, it has been found that boys tend to contribute more labour to the family than girls (Ilon, 1992).

It is important to realise that domestic labour is not merely a lost opportunity cost for parents but it is also a loss of energy which could be devoted by the child to school work. The extra labour expended by girls in particular on domestic chores affects school work in terms of time lost, concentration levels in the classroom and available time for home work. Girls also have higher costs in getting to school than boys which are a further drain on time and energy. Walking is by far the most common way of getting to school and rural girls spend more time walking, on average, than other groups; 87% of rural girls in Zimbabwe walk to school and spend nearly an hour walking to and from school. It is notable that girls walk more than boys. Boys in rural areas have more transportation options than girls (by bicycle and bus, for example). Walking involves loss of energy and parents lose the labour of children .

The direct costs for schooling can also differ substantially according to gender. In Zimbabwe parents opted to give their sons more 'discretionary' spending money than girls (Ilon, 1992). In all three countries, the costs of uniforms for girls are generally higher than for boys. A pilot survey of parents and school children in the Machinga district of Malawi found that those families with both boys and girls spent significantly more on sons than daughters in terms of money for schooling (Hyde and Kadzamira, 1994). More detailed research of these direct and indirect costs is needed in order to help explain why parents withdraw their girls from school more readily than boys.

4.3 Family, community and social class

The limited evidence that is available suggests that socio-economic status, region of residence and religion are more important factors influencing girls education than among boys (Hyde, 1989). However, in Malawi, some research indicates that family background variables are of lower explanatory power than either school variables or other variables such as urban or rural residence. In the literature on gender and education in SSA, there is little serious examination of social class as a factor in the educational participation of girls. However, it has been widely observed that the parents of female students at primary and secondary school are more educated than those of

males (see for example, ILO, 1990 and de la Gorgendiere, 1995, Hyde and Kadzamira, 1994). It is also well known that better educated mothers are likely to educate their daughters.

A recent survey of teachers, university students and secondary students in Ghana which looked at the educational background of parents of students illustrates graphically the multiplier effect of female education. Female students who had mothers with higher levels of education were themselves given opportunities and funding to promote their own education to higher levels. Only a very small minority of female students at university and secondary school levels had mothers with no education at all or education limited to primary school. The implication of this is that for the multiplier effect to work it is important for females to be educated beyond the primary level (de la Gorgendiere, 1995). Other studies have also shown that the impact on daughter's schooling to be greater if the mother has secondary education.

In Malawi, more educated parents tend to scnd their children to school at an earlier age and this tends to be more pronounced for girls (Hyde, 1992). However, the better educational background of girl student's in Malawi does not seem to make much difference to academic performance, although it is not clear whether this has been adequately researched by existing studies. A study of social class and academic performance in the Cameroon (Cammish and Brock, 1994) suggests that girls from elite families overcome the disadvantages of their sex and have a higher pass rate at secondary school than boys from almost all other occupational backgrounds. A survey of exam performance in primary schools in Kenya showed that social and economic status is strongly correlated with terminal examination performance. Offspring of professional fathers scored an average of 60 more marks than farmer's children. The Kenyan study also found that students who ate more than three meals obtained higher scores, as did girls of higher than average height (Appleton, 1994). These factors can also be related to the better financial background of parents. However, in both these cases the girls attended better schools than boys. More attention needs to be paid to social class as an element in gender disadvantage.

4.3.1 Parental attitudes and influence

Parental attitudes concerning education are clearly a key factor since they often help influence which children go to school and how long they stay there. Clearly, the attitudes of parents reflect those in the society at large and are deeply embedded in prevailing cultural norms and values. However, the role of parental attitudes in shaping the educational aspirations of their children is unevenly documented for Africa.

Much of the primary research on gender and education in Malawi in the 1990s has taken place in schools and communities in the south of Malawi, which has the lowest socio-economic indicators and literacy rates. A major assumption underlying the Girls' Attainment in Basic Literacy (GABLE) project

(financed by USAID) in Malawi, which seeks to promote the higher participation and achievement of girls at primary school, is that the attitude of parents has an important impact on the schooling of girls. The fact that drop out is heavily concentrated in the primary school years suggests that it occurs when girls are still largely under parental influence (Hyde and Kadzamira, 1994). Furthermore, girls from poor rural communities have a higher degree of social control exerted over their activities than boys. Males tend to be more independent than females and they are often able to make choices that lie outside any obligations to family and household welfare (Evans, 1991).

Attitudes that reflect gender structuring are equally present at home and school, serving to circumscribe the opportunities available for girls compared to boys for education. Many of the parents who cited negative parental attitudes towards educating girls as a key factor for female drop out rates in one district in Zambia were not formally educated. Mothers seemed to recognise that perhaps their own attitudes towards education in general and towards educating girls especially might negatively impact on their daughter's persistence at school (Hyde and Kadzamira, 1994).

In an ethnographic study of factors influencing persistence of girls in comparison to boys at the primary school level in the Zomba district, 68% of fathers/male guardians and 70.3% of mothers and female guardians stated that boys are more intelligent than girls. This is despite the fact that the vast majority of respondents asserted that it was important to educate both girls and boys (ABEL, 1992). Furthermore, only 1.4% of female guardians and 8.8% of male guardians thought that it was more important to educate boys because they are more likely to return the educational investment whereas girls do not concentrate because they are preoccupied with being mothers and getting married (Ibid). The results of a survey of parental attitudes at primary schools in Kenya suggested that the relative performance of girls and boy children is self-fulfilling. If they think women are less able, then their daughters will indeed be less able (Appleton, 1994).

Presumably, because they consider the primary role of girls to be 'wives and mothers', parents consider that their sons should reach a higher educational level than girls (ABEL, 1992 and Davidson and Kanyuka, 1992). By Standard 8 in Malawi, the impact of parental attitudes as a reason for girls dropping out is almost negligible (Ibid)). This is probably because most girls who are going to drop out have already done so. Research sponsored by USAID in Malawi in 1992/3 revealed that the decision to leave school is frequently made by the girls themselves rather than their parents. 'Lack of interest' was cited by parents to explain their daughter's decision to withdraw from school. This took place in a context where the average classroom to pupil ratio in Malawi averaged 117 (GABLE, 1995).

The GABLE pilot survey of parents and school-aged children in Malawi's Machinga district found that the vast majority of parents (over 97%), felt that it was a good idea to get more girls into school. The most commonly cited

son was that it was necessary for national development, improved ances of employment, provided literacy and enabled girls to help their rents. For the small minority of those who felt educating girls was not a ood idea, the principle reason was the risk of pregnancy (Hyde and adzamira, 1994). This survey also highlighted the problem of rigid gender oles ascribed to both male and female children. When asked what specific skills girls gained at school, the majority (76%) referred to domestic skills of various types and less than 4% mentioned job skills. All but one of the focus groups felt that the behaviour of schooled and unschooled girls differed, all of them positive for schooled girls. The most commonly cited reason by the groups was that girls who had been to school were more cultured and disciplined. Four-fifths of the respondents felt that schooling would promote the farming skills of their daughters through improved knowledge as farming is part of the curriculum. However, it was clear that schooling did not significantly enhance suitability as a marriage partner.

This survey reveals a strong desire for literacy on the part of the parents as individuals, with 90% of parents wishing that they had obtained more education. The dominant reason for wanting to be literate was access to employment opportunities.

There is limited research on parental attitudes towards girls education in Zimbabwe and Zambia, although Gordon mentions that teacher's negative attitudes towards the abilities of girls is much the same as those of parents (Gordon, 1993).

Girls' own attitudes to schooling: To a large extent, girls' attitudes tend to reflect those of their parents. In the GABLE survey in Malawi, girls were asked what they liked about school; the great majority cited various school subjects; reading and writing, also games with friends. Most saw primary schooling as terminal. Both parents and children in the GABLE study showed little knowledge of educational opportunities and 82% of girls reported that they had no knowledge of any girls in their villages who had gone further than the desired level. The main constraint against girls reaching a desired level of education was lack of school fees. In many cases, their attitudes reflected a real lack of educational opportunities in the area beyond primary school. Both girls and parents in this area of southern Malawi have very few role models of educated women in their communities. Almost all girls expected to have a job and the most popular occupations were teacher, nanny, nurse and doctor (Hyde and Kadzamira, 1994). What is lacking in this survey of school children is any exploration their views towards sexuality.

4.3.2. Initiation and early marriage

Initiation is a cultural practice which in some cases interferes with a girl's schooling. In the GABLE survey in Malawi, 72% of a sample of parents from 10 schools in Machinga District had either sent their daughters for initiation of intended to do so. Initiation in Malawi takes place in the long holidays and supposedly does not interfere with schooling. Often girls are taken away from

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school after initiation, although due to lack of information it is difficult to gauge precisely its impact on schooling (Hyde and Kadzamira,1994). In other parts of Africa, girls are withdrawn permanently from school after initiation having been seen by their communities as 'becoming a woman' (Maimbolwa-Sinyangwe, 1994).

Initiation rites in Malawi appear to vary in structure and length in different communities and regions. They may form a series of rites and rituals that will continue for up to a month. It has been noted that amongst the matrilineal groups in Malawi initiation is regarded as a necessity and more emphasis is placed on the education of boys (Kapakasa, 1992). However, Zeitlyn observes that the relationship between schooling and initiation is not entirely clear from existing research. It is obviously important to understand further how communities view adolescence and girlhood in relation to education (Zeitlyn, 1994).

Role conflicts emerge for girls with regard to initiation and the practice is often a financial drain, depleting resources which could have been devoted to schooling. The GABLE Pilot Survey for Malawi recommended that churches should take a strong stand on initiation in order to reduce the rate of female drop out because of the practice (Hyde, 1994).

Early marriage in many instances is decided upon by parents or guardians. In Zambia, as the girl grows older, her family is concerned about the possibility of her getting pregnant out of wedlock and having a child before a girl gets married often implies that the family cannot demand a high bride price if she does get married eventually. Where there are financial constraints, parents may choose to marry a daughter in order to use the bride price to send her siblings to school or simply reduce the burden of having to support too many children. Many parents still believe that they stand to gain more by educating sons than daughters who end up getting married and leaving their husbands to control the family income (Maimbolwa-Sinyangwe, 1994). A conference on 'Girls Education in Africa' held in London in April 1995 and attended by a large number of women from SSA countries, recommended that early marriages for girls should be discouraged. Both early marriage and initiation were seen by the mostly African participants as being serious constraints against girls' education.

The wide age range of students attending primary schools is an important feature of the education system in Malawi. Children three or more years older than their expected age comprise 60% or more of all primary enrolments after Standard 1. This slows down instruction for all and for this reason GABLE has suggested that the Government of Malawi (GOM) adopts a maximum age of entry policy for schools. A high proportion of children attending the last grades of primary school are in their late teens and, according to custom, are ready for marriage. In Malawi, the GABLE pilot survey reveals that children in rural Malawi are expected to start forming their own households at around 15 years (Hyde, 1994). Girls get married at that age and boys often find employment or start farming. As most children do not start school until they

are about 10 and about one-third repeat Standard 1, by the time they are 15 they are unlikely to have progressed beyond Standard 4. In this context, it would seem sensible not only to pressure the communities to encourage the later marriage of girls but also to encourage children to start school earlier.

In Zambia and Zimbabwe, the age range of primary school pupils is less extreme than in Malawi, although girls are usually somewhat younger than boys. However, in rural areas children generally go to school later than in urban areas.

4.3.3. Sexuality and sexual harassment

Sexuality is another major area of concern affecting female participation in education. The problems surrounding sexuality inevitably straddle both non-school based and school based factors and they also reflect wider issues of power and control within particular societies. The following discussion will attempt to show how attitudes and norms surrounding sexuality influence girls' educational outcomes. The final recommendations of an extensive report on gender and education in Tanzania produced for SIDA commented that more research was needed on the issue of sexuality, which was described as a 'burning issue for our youth' (Mbilinyi et al, 1991). This is equally true in Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The whole issue of the impact of sexuality on schooling has been insufficiently considered by educational researchers even though it is well known that the rates of both teenage pregnancy and HIV/AIDS infection are high, particularly amongst young females in all three countries.

The two major reasons for girls dropping out of school are poverty (inability to pay for school fees and uniforms and high opportunity costs) and pregnancy. The way in which pregnancy is dealt with as a policy issue and the attitudes of parents and teaching staff to girls' sexuality reflects the profoundly anti-female bias in these societies. A pilot study in 1994 of schools in Lusaka township reported that one-third of girls had dropped out of school through pregnancy (Maimbolwa-Sinyangwe, 1994). Up until 1993, girls who become pregnant were expelled from school. Since then, the boys responsible can also be expelled but only if the girl's parents insist. The new education policy for Zambia (1995) now makes it possible for the re-admission of girls who have left to have babies.

In Malawi, a similar situation has existed with regard to official policies of expulsion for pregnant school girls. The current policy (as of 1994) at all levels of education is that girls who become pregnant must leave school. They can only be readmitted at tertiary level if they can prove that adequate arrangements have been made for care of the child. Furthermore, up until recently, a medical examination to check for signs of pregnancy was carried out on all school girls each term (Hyde and Kadzamira, 1994). For many of those who leave school because of pregnancy, this is the end of their education.

Davidson and Kanyuka (1992) reported in their survey of households in the Zomba district of Malawi that one-third of families with daughters who had dropped out of schools had done so for reasons of early marriage and 16.7% because of pregnancy. In 8 out of the 10 control groups of parents in the GABLE pilot survey, the most frequently cited reason for female drop out was pregnancy with poverty coming second. It is also clear from this survey of parents attitudes towards the education of girls that fear of pregnancy is a major reason (and a valid one) for their ambivalent attitude to their daughters' education. There is little mention in the literature on Malawi about the role of male teachers in sexual harassment and the problem of HIV/AIDS amongst young people.

Gordon reports that sexual and verbal harassment of girls in Zimbabwe's co-educational secondary schools are common. In a survey of 10 secondary schools, a number of girls interviewed cited teasing, humiliation, verbal bullying and ridicule of girls by boys as a major problem for girls at school. This harassment occurs both within and outside the classroom (often on their way to school). Teachers often collude with male pupils in the verbal harassment of girls in the classroom either directly or by omission (Gordon, 1993). Teachers who were interviewed confirmed the girls' statements about boys harassing them although they thought it best to ignore such behaviour. They also felt that girls should be more assertive and stand up for themselves.

The issue of sexual abuse was seen by female pupils as one of the main problems facing girls at schools (particularly those in rural areas). According to one girl, 'one of the big problems is teachers proposing love to girls' (Ibid:16). In general, teachers interviewed (both male and female) denied any knowledge of actual abuse of girl pupils occurring at the time of the study. Nearly all teachers said that such cases had occurred in the past and mainly involved untrained or temporary teachers. Much of the blame for sexual abuse of girl pupils by male teachers was placed on the girls, even though many of them are under the legal age of consent (18 years). Similarly, in the cases where girls are sexually abused, the parents also tend to hold the girls responsible. Significantly, the girls thought that there was no point in reporting incidents to teachers (of either sex).

Girls at school face an impossible conflict of roles. One the one hand, they are chided by teachers for not being more assertive but on the other hand they are treated as 'hunters' of men (Gordon, 1994:20). Teachers in this study consider that the main reason for poor performance of girls academically was that they are mainly interested in love, romance and sex, whereas boy pupils do not take such relationships seriously. It would seem that girl pupils are expected to take responsibility for their actions in a way that boy pupils and male teachers are not. Furthermore, girls are expected to take responsibility for boy's sexuality as well as their own (Ann Cotton, CAMFED Conference, 1995).

It is hardly likely that male pupils will refrain from sexual activity in school if their male role models are engaged in the same practices. An examination of the explanations for the dismissal of a random sample of 48 teachers dismissed for misconduct in two months of 1992 in Zimbabwe revealed that 54% were discharged for sexual offenses with students. In 1988 and 1989, 520 and 468 teachers respectively were dismissed for misconduct. This is almost certainly a major underestimate of the number of girls endangered by harassment each year (IBRD, 1992a). Strict codes of practice need to be adopted and enforced in schools around the issue of sexual harassment by teachers.

In short, sexual harassment, under-age sex and teenage pregnancies are major problems in all three countries. The costs to girls of these activities are considerable: not only loss of educational potential but also the health risks connected with pregnancy and HIV/AIDS. In Zimbabwe, many children contribute to the costs of their education by finding casual work. In the present economic conditions, poverty coupled with the prevailing view in Zimbabwe that adolescent girls are aids free, causes many young girls to be pressed by men to exchange sex for cash (CAMFED, 1995). This depressing trend is confirmed by Ministry of Health statistics on AIDS cases. A study in Matabeleland showed that girls' chances of contracting AIDS in the 15-18 age group are 6.5 greater than boys. It is often difficult to persuade men to undergo testing or accept responsibility for transmission of AIDS/HIV. At the same time, there is a trend for men to seek out younger and younger sexual partners (UNICEF, 1994). In Zambia, the picture is similar in terms of high rates of confirmed AIDS cases amongst the 15-19 age group which, between 1985 and 1995 were seven times greater for females than males (Sampa, 1995 and UNICEF, 1995b).

Concern about the rates of teenage pregnancy and HIV/AIDS infection has led to demands for the development of sex education in both primary and secondary school curriculum but this has only recently been developed for schools in Zimbabwe by UNICEF in conjunction with the Ministry of Education and Culture. The MEC is now providing training materials for students and teachers in AIDS education for all levels from primary to Grade 4 of secondary (UNICEF, 1994). However, sex and sexuality are often taboo subjects in these countries which makes education in the schools of central importance in addressing this major threat to the health of girls and women in particular.

4. 4. School-based factors

4.4.1. Girls and the school environment

As noted earlier, negative attitudes towards the abilities of girls are deeply embedded in all cultures and, as in the colonial era, education for domesticity is the norm. In Malawi, for example, some subservient cultural practices such as kneeling to parents and elders are carried out in the schools by girls only. Subordinate status is impressed upon girls in all three countries and this is reflected in the structure of schools. Gender bias in schools is often found in

teaching pedagogy, subject streaming, teachers expectations, instructional materials and curriculum content. Inadequate school facilities in Zambia and Malawi mean that many children have to sit on the floor and classes are very crowded, typically with a pupil to teacher ratio of 60:1. In Zambia, lack of water and adequate bathroom facilities have discouraged girls from coming to school when they are menstruating (IBRDb, 1992). Indeed, many schools totally lack sanitary facilities in both urban and rural areas and affects girls more than boys (Kelly, 1994). Similarly, girls from poor rural areas in Zimbabwe will frequently stay away from school during menstruation because of lack of sanitary protection. They are often too embarrassed to explain their absences to the teachers and incur punishments (CAMFED, 1995).

In Zambia the lack of water and poor physical facilities, large class sizes and multiple sessions militate against a secure learning environment (Kelly, 1994). Girls attending day schools in particular, tend to be burdened with domestic work which affects their commitment to schooling. In Malawi, when students are late for school, they are punished by having to do heavy physical labour. Research also indicates that girls at mixed boarding schools in Malawi often end up doing a greater proportion of chores than their male counterparts. Girls at these schools are tightly controlled and confined to their dormitories in the mornings and evenings whilst boys can use classrooms after hours. It is also reported that female students are subject to verbal and psychological harassment when they show signs of good performance (Hyde, 1994). This situation is also found in the other two countries. In the rural areas of all three countries where untrained teachers are concentrated, pedagogical practices tend to be particularly authoritarian and sexist. The atmosphere in mixed secondary schools, is not supportive for girls.

4.4.2. Teachers: expectations and attitudes

It is clear from research in Malawi that girls in school lack female role models both inside and outside their communities which means the female teacher is of great potential importance. Table 7 shows the distribution of female teachers in Zimbabwe, Zambia and Mozambique. In 1990, the highest proportion of women primary teachers was in Zambia at 45%, although they were mainly concentrated in Lusaka and the Copperbelt. (The data for secondary teachers are incomplete). The preponderance of female teachers in the urban areas is a result of a policy which guarantees employment to teachers when their spouses are transferred. This policy is currently being reviewed. However it does highlight the point that in all three countries, most teachers, but particularly women, would prefer to work in urban or peri-urban areas.

The proportion of women teachers in Zimbabwean secondary schools dropped between 1980 and 1990 - from 37% to 29% (see Table 7). Most women teachers are found in urban areas in Zambia and Malawi which means that most rural schools have only a small proportion (often less than 20%) of women teachers. In Malawi, only 27% of the teachers in rural areas are female compared with 60% in urban areas. This is mainly due to the fact that

women do not want to work in isolated areas where their security and housing is not certain. The proportion of women teachers in maths and science in all three countries is particularly low mainly because so few women with the necessary science and maths background get on to teacher training programmes. In Zambia, a special training course for the maths and science education project trained only 20 women in 1988 out of a total of 200 teacher participants (IBRDb, 1992). The lack of female role models in the so called 'hard' school subjects such as science and maths does not improve girls' interest and attainment in these areas.

Girls have few role models to emulate in the area of education management. For example, in Zambia, out of 200 senior education officers in post in 1992, only 17 were women. For this reason, the World Bank funded Education Rehabilitation Project in Zambia which began in 1992, is attempting to incorporate gender training into all teacher training and education management courses and to address the logistical constraints that reduce female participation in such courses.

Bentry Nkhata from the University of Zambia in 1994 submitted a proposal based on an OU/ILEA 'Girls into maths' pack to run a 'Girls into maths and science study group' in order to raise the achievement of pupils in maths and science through increased teacher awareness of issues in gender and maths and science teaching (Nkhata, 1994). The progress of this course is not known. Special training for teachers of maths and science could be organised as part of INSET programmes.

The advantages of women teachers: International evidence on the impact of women teachers and headteachers on girls and boys is limited. More systematic research is needed which controls for key factors such as size and type of school and teacher and head teacher characteristics. However, positive correlations between the number of female teachers and parity of male/female enrolment have been made using international cross sectional data (Herz, 1991 and Rockerfeller, 1995). And, in socio-cultural settings where male and female contact is strictly limited, as in parts of South Asia, the evidence suggests that recruitment of female teachers does enhance girls' enrolment. On the basis of such information, the World Bank is making a major effort to promote female teacher recruitment by supporting the training of women teachers.

In Zambia, the provinces with a high proportion of women teachers also have high primary school completion rates for girls while the provinces with the lowest proportion of women teachers have the lowest completion rates (Kelly, 1994). In the context of Zambia and Zimbabwe, the positive impact of female headteachers on girls is considered stronger than that of female teachers (Kelly, 1994 and UNICEF, 1994). A recent study of reading advantage found that, in a sub-set of countries (including Singapore, Trinidad and Tobago), girls performed better when their teacher was also female. Similarly, a recent US study revealed that women who teach feel more efficacious in their work when the head is also female (Fuller et al, 1994).

Appleton's study of factors affecting the exam performance of boys and girls at primary schools in Kenya raises an unusual question: the impact of teacher gender on boys. He finds that women teachers had a generally negative influence on the performance of boys but had no effect either way on girls' performance. His explanation is that male students in Kenya - typically aged 14 plus by the end of primary school see themselves as 'young men' and they may, therefore, be more ready to accept the authority of a male rather than a female teacher. The effect on boys of a woman teacher was significant: on average, a boy taught by men would receive 69 marks more than one taught by a woman. On the basis of this result, Appleton challenged the logic of the Kenya government's current programme to train more women teachers! Clearly, however, more needs to be known about the construction of the survey before one is inclined to accept this conclusion. Designing policy in this area requires an understanding of the relative impact of teacher gender on pupils of both sexes as well as the extent of the gender gap in performance.

The Kenyan study also showed that the gender of the headteacher was significantly related to school performance. Performance in the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education in 9 schools with a female head out of his sample was significantly better than in the remaining 41 (Appleton, 1994).

Teacher attitudes: Although female teachers are clearly important as role models for girls, there is little evidence to suggest that negative attitudes towards the abilities of girls are any less prevalent amongst female teachers than male. For example, in a survey of 12 secondary schools in southern Malawi, Hyde showed that there was little difference between male and female teachers with respect to their attitudes towards female students. 77% of female teachers responded and 80% of males felt that boys were more interested in school work than girls (Hyde, 1994). In fact, more male than female teachers in the study felt that teaching methods for boys and girls should differ. Both evaluated girl students as more passive and referred to the greater questioning of boys. However, an important consideration in the Malawi context which tempers these conclusions is that female teachers are in general less educated than males due to lack of university and other training opportunities when they were young. Consequently, they are probably less confident than their male colleagues. As noted earlier, it is well known that pedagogical practices tend to be particularly authoritarian amongst poorly trained teachers.

The Hyde study also found that male head teacher respondents at mixed secondary schools, commonly referred to the 'laziness' and 'sense of inferiority' among female students (Hyde, 1994:21). She concluded that headteachers (the large majority of whom were male) displayed a general awareness of the educational problems that girls faced in trying to complete their secondary education but varied in their awareness of the role they could play in ameliorating such problems. However, in the four single sex schools that were surveyed, female teachers did indicate that they had introduced innovations to improve the performance of girls. It would appear, therefore,

that differences exist in teacher behaviour and practice according to whether the culture of the school is predominantly male or female. Hyde also found that the attitudes of teachers closely reflect those of the parents with regard to girls innate abilities and potential. Girls' concepts of gender roles and related natures, abilities and aptitudes in turn tend to mirror those of their parents and teachers. As elsewhere, the socialisation process has a profound effect on African girls at both home and school.

Gordon's study of teachers and pupils in Zimbabwean secondary schools arrives at similar results and conclusions to those in Malawi. Perhaps her most important finding is that, while there was a general awareness among teaching personnel about poor performance among girls, the causes were not perceived as being the responsibility of the school or the teachers. In short, the stereotyping of gender roles in school by teachers affects their own expectations and treatment of the girls. In her study, there was a remarkable consistency (one assumes among both male and female teachers) in the acceptance of the female role as being primarily domestic and the belief that the man is the breadwinner and provider (over 90% of the teachers interviewed). Many teachers saw it as their duty to prepare students for these roles. There was also a high degree of correlation between occupational aspirations of parents and their daughters. Most parents interviewed wanted their daughters to be nurses, teachers, clerks and secretaries and their sons to be engineers, doctors, drivers and craftsmen (Gordon, 1993). Gendered subject specialisation at secondary school is carried over into gender segregated labour markets.

There is clearly a conflict between good performance in maths and science and the notion of the passive female who specialises in domestic science and homecare. If these roles are to be challenged it is vital that the sex stereotyping of subjects is ended and active attempts are made to encourage the participation of girls in maths, science and non-traditional vocational courses. This can be done in a variety of ways including more flexible timetabling, introducing gender sensitive curricula and teaching materials as well as counselling.

4.4.3. Single sex schools

There is widespread evidence from many SSA countries, including the three under scrutiny, that educational outcomes for girls attending single sex schools are better than girls enrolled at mixed schools. The generally negative environment for girls in mixed schools in Zambia, Zimbabwe and Malawi goes a long way to explaining why girls perform better at single sex schools (and single sex boarding schools in particular). Most heads of single sex girls schools are female as are most, although not all, of the staff. These institutions do provide positive role models for girls, and, equally important, an atmosphere that is free from sexual harassment. However, little detailed research is available that explains the processes operating at these schools.

In Malawi, head teachers in all girl schools report placing stronger emphasis on raising 'independence and achievement' of female students (Fuller et al, 1994). As discussed earlier, despite the improvement in performance among girls at single sex schools in Malawi, their pass rates are still 10% lower than boys in all boy schools and 5% lower than boys in mixed schools. Evidence from Malawi and Zimbabwe shows that single sex schools are an advantage for both sexes, but particularly for girls. Nyagura and Riddell's analysis of 48 secondary schools in Zimbabwe pointed to the need for further research to identify which aspects of boarding and single sex education explain the higher levels of academic achievement found in these schools. Even though boarding schools are a very high cost alternative to day schools and therefore cannot become a realistic alternative, it seems important to investigate if boarding schools have certain characteristics which could be replicated in day schools (Nyagura and Riddell, 1991).

One of the main advantages of all girls boarding schools in Zimbabwe is that the pupils are allocated extra study sessions attended by a resident teacher. This extra time for study could be contributing to better performance. Another feature of boarding schools is that children from poor homes receive more nutritious meals than they would at home (CAMFED, 1995). Investigating which factors of advantage associated with single sex schools, particularly with regard to maths and science for girls might help identify strategies that could lessen gender inequalities and improve school effectiveness.

In Zambia, it is well known that girls attending single sex schools perform better than at mixed schools mainly because girls are not socially rewarded for good performance at mixed schools. However, the performance of girls in Zambia at single sex schools only surpasses their performance in regular co-educational schools. Although this effect occurs consistently in each province, in some it is very strong. For instance, in the Central Province, 63% of girls in single sex schools obtained full certificates as against 16.5% of those in co-educational schools. However, the factor of quality must be taken into account as some are mission schools and some boarding schools (Kelly, 1994).

The main vocational training organisation in Zambia received more applicants from girls who had attended single sex schools than mixed for the accountancy course (70% of female applicants are from single sex schools). This would suggest that the standard of maths is higher at these institutions as this subject is a prerequisite for entry to accountancy (ILO, 1990). It might also indicate that girls from single sex schools are more confident and have been encouraged through counselling to apply for training in non-traditional areas. Indeed, the recent education policy paper for Zambia intends to create more boarding places for girls, presumably at single sex schools (ROZ, 1995).

While half of the girls taking MSCE exams in Malawi come from mixed sex schools, 70% of girls who gain admission to Chancellor College come from single sex schools (Kadzamira, 1994 and Hiddleston, 1991). The CAMFED

scheme in Zimbabwe is attempting to create a more balanced enrolment between boys and girls in rural secondary schools by the provision of bursaries for girls. 'Girls, already more reticent than boys by the age of entry to secondary school, are more likely to play an active, participative role in the classroom when they form part of a large group' (CAMFED, 1994:4). The experiences of the small number of secondary schools that CAMFED supports in Zimbabwe strongly suggests that transforming mixed sex schools requires a major effort as well as financial and moral support for girls.

It is not entirely clear what it is about single sex girls schools that makes for greater academic success across all subjects. Obviously not all single sex schools work well for girls. Some single sex private secondary schools in Tanzania, for example, are of a very low standard. Quality is a critically important variable in determining whether girls from a single sex school will perform well academically. Hyde found in Malawi that girls in single sex secondary schools tended to be more competitive and presumably less passive than in mixed schools. Also, the female teachers in the four single sex schools in the survey indicated that they had introduced innovations to improve the performance of girls (Hyde, 1994). While some female teachers who were interviewed still held negative attitudes towards girl's abilities, presumably the all-female atmosphere has other positive benefits for the students. The advantages of a protected atmosphere free of male harassment (verbal and sexual) along with female role models are likely to be among the most important. A conference in 1994 held in Malawi on maths education called for a greater number of single sex schools in order to boost girls' performance in maths and science.

There are, however, huge variations in the quality of single sex schools and this should be taken into consideration in assessing their effectiveness. It has been pointed out, for example in Zimbabwe, some of the older single sex schools offer only limited gender defined subject choices that limit girls chances of access to labour markets (Gordon, 1993). It would seem that in others, girls manage to perform much better in maths and science options than in mixed schools. When communities were consulted in Zimbabwe about what kind of schools they wanted for their children after Independence, the majority opinion was in favour of single sex boarding schools (Chung, 1995). The education authorities as part of their massive post-independence expansion campaign preferred instead to construct new mixed day schools because these were seen as being more equitable and cost effective forms of provision.

Official policy in most SSA countries is to encourage co-educational schools, mainly on the grounds of efficiency and cost. Just as in Britain during the 1970s, the received wisdom favours co-education, largely for social reasons. Given this policy preference, gender streaming in mixed schools may well offer a temporary solution to the problems of poor performance and high dropout rates of girls at both primary and secondary schools.

Gender streaming: Three main strategies have been employed to improve girls' performance in Malawi: (1) Tighter control of female students' use of designated study time; (2) some form of separation of the sexes during instruction; and (3) talks and counselling by female teachers. The staff at one boarding school associated girls' poor performance with their poor attendance at homework sessions (prep). Consequently, attendance at prep was made compulsory. The attendance at prep improved although it is too early to assess the impact on performance. Although Kelly in his 'Situation Analysis of Girl Child Education in Zambia' recommends that pilot studies be undertaken to test out streaming by sex, Malawi is the only country (among the three under investigation), where gender streaming within mixed secondary schools has actually been tried. For some time in Malawi, a few schools have experimented with gender streaming within the same school. One example of this separation strategy comes from a school near Zomba which from 1980 until recently initiated an experiment in order to find out whether teaching maths to single sex groups would improve exam results. At JCE level, the pass rate for girls increased from 24% to just over 60% in 1985 and between 1988-1991 the pass rates reached over 80% (Hyde,1994).

A total of 15 teachers in three schools in the Hyde survey said they had conducted gender related experiments. In one school, the maths teachers (one of whom was an expatriate) were concerned about the significant differences between male and female performance at the JC and MCE levels. They also noticed the negative attitudes girls had towards the subject and the fact that girls who took maths were disparaged by their male classmates. The maths teachers of this school, with the cooperation of the headmaster and Ministry of Education, decided to employ two way streaming by gender and ability, with four groups placed in separate classes (i.e. the top girls and top boys were put in separate classes and the bottom girls and boys had their own classes). Female pass rates at JC went up from just over 20% in 1981 (before the innovation) to over 80% between 1988 and 1991. Boys also benefitted. Their pass rates increased from around 70% to close to 100% in 1988. The MCE results also show a consistently upward trend for both boys and girls. What this streaming experiment achieved was to raise the performance of both boys and girls at JC and MCE and it also narrowed the differential between them at JC level (Hyde, 1994:24-25). An important feature of this experiment was that there had been low staff turnover over the period of the innovation. Also, the striking gains in performance of girls were made at no extra financial cost to the school.

Despite the gains made during these experiments in streaming, they have apparently been recently abandoned because the schools thought it would be a better social experience for boys and girls to mix together during their adolescent period (Kadzamira, 1994). This does seem an extraordinary turnaround which might relate to central government directives on the importance of co-educational schooling. However, the GABLE project is currently financing a pilot project on gender streaming in mathematics classes to test the effectiveness of gender streaming at the primary level. Clearly,

streaming of this kind has great advantages in that it can be organised at little or no extra cost (apart from time) to the school. Streaming in subjects like maths and science where girls perform particularly badly would seem a sensible short term option until attitudes towards girls' abilities in the wider society show some signs of change, although its success would seem to depend on a high level of staff commitment and continuity. Single sex schooling is probably not an option for new development due to cost although it does provide a temporary solution to the problems girls are experiencing in mixed schools.

CHAPTER 5

POLICY OPTIONS: AN OVERVIEW

5.1. Introduction

Strategies to redress gender inequalities are usually constructed on the basis of "supply" and "demand factors". Supply side strategies to expand access are necessary to increase girls' enrolment but they are rarely sufficient. International experience has shown that simply expanding education programmes does not automatically result in greater female enrolment. In some South Asian countries and Yemen, school expansion policies have only been effective when accompanied by other policies that lower the direct or opportunity cost of education or raise the benefits (King and Hill, 1993).

Numerous gender specific education policies have been tried by governments, donors and NGOs in a variety of combinations in each of the three countries under scrutiny. Because most of them have only been introduced over the last five years or so, any systematic and comprehensive impact evaluation is not possible. Nonetheless, some data are already available about short term outputs and impacts. The World Bank has undertaken or directly supported much of the research that has informed and shaped policy initiatives of all kinds in support of female education (mostly in South Asia and some in Africa). Early Bank funded projects tended to focus on single interventions. However, most were not successful because they could not address the multiple constraints affecting girls. In contrast, projects that implemented 'package' approaches have had better results (Herz et al, 1991). There is, however, some disagreement among World Bank programme officers regarding the desirability and feasibility of the 'package approach'. Some believe that compound strategies are more effective than single approaches while others consider that the multiple approaches may overburden government bureaucracies in some countries and resulting in poor implementation. Despite these reservations, the weight to research evidence and theoretical considerations would suggest that policy 'packages' are likely to be the most effective (Stromquist, 1994).

Two main types of gender strategies have been tried: (i) providing more educational facilities for girls and; (ii) reducing the direct and indirect costs of schooling. The following policies have been developed by governments and aid donors.

5.2 Expanding educational provision

It is obvious that educational provision must be tailored to the specific needs of particular countries. More than half of existing World Bank projects (in 1991) emphasised physical access to schools and 46% of the projects included having more female teachers and removing sexual stereotypes from textbooks (Ibid). Various strategies have been designed to improve girl's access to schooling. In some countries like Malawi and Zambia there is an

urgent need to construct more schools in both rural and urban areas. In terms of physical provision, it is essential that any new schools or converted schools provide adequate sanitary facilities and privacy for girls as these factors often affect the attendance of girls as we have seen.

Quota systems for girls entering secondary school have been introduced at various times in Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe as well as other SSA countries. In Tanzania, a quota system involving the separate selection of boys and girls and admission of girls with lower grades into Form I of secondary school has been quite successful in increasing female enrolments of girls although a 50:50 policy should be the goal (Mbilinyi et al, 1991). Quotas for secondary schooling are probably necessary but again they are not sufficient to improve girls' participation if they are not accompanied by financial support. In Malawi the 33% quota system for girls' entry into secondary school does not seem to have significantly raised the proportion of girls over the last decade. Girls' access to secondary education in Zambia has been hampered by the practice of reserving approximately one-third of places in co-educational state schools for girls (Kelly, 1994).

5.3 Type of school provision and organisation

Organisation issues are of paramount importance when considering any expansion of school enrolments. The size and spacial distribution of schools is particularly critical. The choice is often between one large centralised school or smaller schools at shorter distances from children's' homes. Research suggests that smaller schools with closer community ties are more effective for boys as well as girls (Herz et al, 1991). The distance problem has been approached in two ways: either the schools are brought closer to homes or boarding facilities are provided. There is a strong move towards decentralisation of school structures in many African countries which has the potential of bringing schooling closer to the people. Different modes of educational delivery have been experimented with, including multigrade classrooms, double shifting with feeder and satellite schools at the primary level, radio and correspondence courses at the post-primary levels, and literacy programmes for adults (King and Hill, 1993). Distance education is particularly suited to countries like Zambia with widely dispersed rural communities.

The relative merits of single sex day and boarding schools have already been discussed at some length. Although single sex boarding schools are relatively costly, they do seem to offer a safe and secure atmosphere for girls. Until mixed schools are able to provide an atmosphere that is supportive to girls, single sex schooling, in theory at least, remains a desirable, although costly, option.

5.4 School inputs

Research has established that once schools have been built, further investment in physical infrastructure is less important for student learning than incremental expenditures on curriculum design, textbooks and other inputs to improve school quality. Parents are more willing to shoulder the costs of educating children if they consider the curriculum relevant and the quality of schooling adequate

Appleton's study of Kenyan primary schools showed that students from homes with books and from schools with more textbooks performed better in the primary school leaving exams (Appleton, 1994). It is now widely accepted that textbooks have a definite positive impact on children's educational progress. Providing more textbooks per child at the same time as making the curriculum and textbooks gender sensitive and promoting positive images of women and girls, should work to both improve the quality of education and reduce gender bias in the long term. World Bank assisted projects in Bangladesh and The Gambia support the development of unbiased educational materials and teacher training programmes designed to eliminate gender bias in the classroom (Herz et al, 1991). The impact of textbooks and other school learning materials is particularly important where these constitute the sum of written materials in childrens' lives. It is likely in the African context that girls will derive more benefit than boys from improved curricula and textbooks as they receive less attention from teachers and tend to be left more on their own (Kelly, 1994).

Anna Obura in a study of school textbooks in Kenya found evidence of severe gender bias and distortions in the roles and images of women portrayed in textbooks across all subjects. The passive and domestic roles of women found in these texts was sharply at odds with reality (Obura, 1991). In countries like Zambia and Zimbabwe there have been some efforts to improve the general quality of textbooks, but due to general shortages, many schools are using older textbooks which are still gender biased. Less progress has been made in changing content of curriculum from a gender perspective than in textbook development although clearly these should be closely interconnected.

5.4.1. Maths and science

In many parts of the world, girls study less science and maths than boys. Research shows that this reflects a subtle interaction between traditional attitudes on what women 'should study' and the options for study offered to women and girls. Single sex schools often lack the same offerings in maths and science as boys schools and in Africa girls often avoid these subjects because they perceive them to be 'hard'. It is undoubtedly the case that science and maths provision and support for girls needs to be improved. If girls are encouraged to take more maths and science options the benefits could be considerable in terms of access to non-traditional and traditional occupations. In Kenya, for example, where proportionately fewer qualified

girls than boys gain admission to government schools, parents spend more to send girls to private schools (Herz et al, 1991). Three times as many of these girls study science there as do girls in the less costly government schools, which suggests that parents are more willing to pay if girls can study science (World Bank, 1989). The Bank also assists a project in Tanzania which promotes science courses in new secondary schools, 60% of the facilities added are for girls' schools. The Ghana Education Services Offer a two week science clinic for 150 secondary school girls on an annual basis. Furthermore, the Association of Women in Science and Technology in Ghana also organise 'science days' for girls, workshops for women science teachers, and career guidance talks. These initiatives have had a positive impact (Odaga and Heneveld, 1995). Such measures can help in a small way to increase the relevance of the school curriculum and improve educational outcomes for girls.

5.5. Community involvement and awareness

Negative parental attitudes concerning the education of girls may change over time, but in the meantime community awareness campaigns stressing the benefits of educating girls and involving the community in the management of schools need to be explored. If a dialogue can be developed between the community and the school then policy makers are better able to respond to the particular demands of communities. Satellite schools in Bangladesh were popular partly because schools were located closer to communities and partly because the community itself chose opening hours to fit in with their work schedules. In China, India, Morocco, Nepal and Papua New Guinea, community input, from awareness campaigns to educating the community to manage the education projects themselves, has been key to the success of various programmes designed to raise enrolments (Herz,1991). Due to the tight parental control over girls in Africa, it is essential to involve and educate communities about the benefits of girls education. However, this must not merely be a top down process: the community must be genuinely involved in educational decision making.

5.6. Improving girls' health and nutrition

Children's' health and nutritional status has consequences for drop out and school performance. Research in such diverse social settings such as Guatemala and Kenya has established that malnutrition inhibits children's learning even as early as the age of two (Herz et al, 1991). School feeding programmes have been adopted by some governments usually with the assistance of donors (Most notably the World Bank and the World Food programme). Some have had positive effects in improving girls' participation. Recent research in northern Ghana has also shown that schools can be important centres for the delivery of health to teenage children (particularly girls) whose health status is low. However, the same research also shows that cultural constraints affect the drop out of girls from school which is of great concern because they do not benefit from school health services (Fentiman, 1995). In Zimbabwe, both primary and secondary schools under

the new UNICEF Family Life programme will become the main vehicle for the delivery of HIV/AIDS education to high risk groups of young people.

5.7 Recruiting more female teachers

In cultural settings where male/female contact is limited and tightly defined, it is generally the case that the recruitment of female teachers enhances girls enrolments. Several studies using international cross sectional data have found a positive correlation between the proportion of women teachers and size of female school enrolment (Herz et al 1991, Rockerfeller Foundation, 1995). However, this broad statistical picture needs to be unpacked at the national and regional level. As we have seen in Malawi, women teachers do not necessarily have better pedagogical practices than men nor are they more supportive of girl students even though they have more subjective understanding of the 'double burden' of school and domestic work.

In Bangladesh, World Bank funded projects have been part of successful packages to raise the enrolment of girls. Women teachers are popular in schools because of the very strict separation of the sexes required by religious and cultural norms. These conditions are not exactly the same in Africa where girls do have more relative freedom of movement. However, as we have seen, the level of sexual harassment surrounding schooling and risks involved in unwanted pregnancies and HIV are of obvious concern to many African parents. Although the reasons for drop out in our three countries have been by no means exhaustively researched, fear for girls' safety and security is in many cases a very important factor preventing particularly rural households from sending girls to school and keeping them there. The security issue also causes delays in sending girls to school if they are required to travel long distances.

It is undoubtedly the case that in a predominantly female environment, the girls and their parents feel more secure about their education and the girls perform better academically. At the present time, single sex schools, run mainly by women teachers and women heads, are able to boost performance of girls but this must be seen as a short term solution to the problem.

The positive impact of women teachers depends on the environment in which they are working and whether they have been effectively trained. However, the training of all teachers, from a gender perspective is crucial to changing attitudes in the school and community and is likely to have a greater impact than community awareness campaigns in the short and long term. It could well be that the positive impact of having women heads might be even greater than women teachers in terms of providing a secure environment for girls' learning. Experience in Africa has shown that when these conditions are present and there are not financial constraints, parents do not hesitate to send their girls to school.

5.8 Reducing direct costs

5.8.1 Scholarship programmes

Scholarship programmes aimed at reducing direct costs of secondary schooling for girls and their parents may involve the provision of fees as well as meeting other costs associated with schooling such as uniforms, equipment, textbooks etc. Scholarship schemes for girls in particular have proved to be both practical and effective. While the high costs of such schemes make them difficult to replicate country wide, they have, nonetheless, been shown to be extremely helpful in raising female enrolment in specific localities and producing positive female role models. A World Bank funded project in Bangladesh that dates from 1977, gives 18,000 girls annually in grades 6-10 of secondary school scholarships to cover school fees. Female enrolment doubled from 27.3% to 43.5% during the course of the eighteen year project. Female drop outs also fell dramatically from 14.7% to 3.5% (Herz et al,1991). Overall, the project met its main goals: female graduates 'are marrying later, bearing fewer children and finding employment outside the home' (ibid:44). A number of important lessons have been learned from this project, notably the necessity of establishing realistic selection criteria for students receiving scholarships and the need to build these into the project from the beginning.

A similar World Bank assisted project was begun in 1987 in a rural Indian community in Guatemala to support female primary students. The programme is supervised by local women and selection carried out by parents' committees. The programme has shown remarkable success in enroling and retaining girls: over 90% of the scholarship girls completed the first year. The involvement of community groups in the targeting and monitoring process has been instrumental in its success. An unanticipated problem has arisen, however, in that girls completing their education have been encouraged to continue with secondary education yet existing post-primary the schools are located far from the communities. Building on the experience of past programmes, another Bank financed project is currently expanding the scholarship effort in Bangladesh and incorporating other measures to reduce the direct costs of girls' schooling.

In Zimbabwe, The Cambridge Female Education Trust (CAMFED), which was founded in 1992, assists girls from disadvantaged social and economic backgrounds in three rural districts to continue their education at the upper primary and secondary levels in day and boarding schools. Teachers, parents and the wider community are actively involved with CAMFED in administering and developing all aspects of the project. As we have seen, many girls in Zimbabwe drop out during puberty for various reasons including poverty, lack of separate bathroom facilities and running water in school, sexual harassment, pregnancy and early marriage. This initiative has its origins in a research project undertaken by Ann Cotton during 1991 in the village of Mola in Nyaminyami district, which found that the main constraint on girls' secondary education was poverty. The project seeks not only to solve the

immediate financial needs of girls who want secondary schooling but it operates an integrated approach to enhance the social environment in which girls grow and learn.

The CAMFED project appears to have selected schools that are receptive to the idea of promoting girl's education and the aim is to encourage these schools to increase female enrolment overall so that there is near parity with boys (CAMFED,1995). The Zimbabwean fieldworker is also in constant contact with the parents and stresses the importance of supporting girls in their school work. She also addresses practical constraints such as menstruation facing girls from poor families who attend school, by encouraging girls to make re-usable sanitary towels and she conducts discussion groups with the girls on key issues such as sexuality and HIV/AIDS. The communities themselves are gradually being integrated into CAMFED's planning process. Sewing cooperatives have been established alongside the project in order to provide employment opportunities for girls leaving school.

The basis of student selection is threefold; (1) the girls must want to go to school; (2) the parents should support her ongoing school attendance and; (3) parents lack adequate funds to support their daughter/s through secondary school. Girls are supported in groups from their communities into day or boarding schools within the districts of Nyaminyami, Chikomba and Nyanga. To date, drop out rates have been very low, although the first cohort of students has yet to receive their 'O' level results. The integration of the project into the community helps to make a bridge between home and school which is the key to its apparent success. It is also an important element in encouraging progressive change in the schools themselves. Finally, CAMFED directly assists the schools by building up links between some secondary schools in Cambridge and project schools in Zimbabwe.

Only a comprehensive evaluation of these students' performance and progress at school will be able to determine the project's overall impact. An evaluation of the project is planned for 1997. In 1994, CAMFED supported 233 girls at secondary schools in Zimbabwe and it will maintain its existing programme of support and expand its development within the same three rural districts. The total budget between 1994-1997 amounts to £365,427 which will provide for 1,308 years of secondary schooling for girls and the costs of dissemination lessons learned from the project (CAMFED, 1995).

As with the World Bank's scholarship programmes, experience suggests that the cost of such programmes can be justified by the obvious health and economic benefits of educating girls in the long run. Both the World Bank and CAMFED type projects are making small contributions to what is a massive problem. CAMFED in particular is a 'flagship' project designed to provide role models in impoverished rural communities. This type of project is certainly replicable in Malawi but it cannot possibly be extended to meet the needs of all rural girls for secondary schooling on the grounds of cost. However, when there are so few female role models in rural communities it would seem to be

a good idea to extend some kind of scholarship programme which could help the process of transforming secondary schools as male dominated institutions as well as assisting individual girls with their education.

The problems that are likely to arise from scholarship programmes are firstly the criteria for selection of students when there is great need and secondly the sustainability of such projects in the long run. An alternative strategy is to introduce fee waivers for girls entering secondary school. This has not been tried often in the three countries under consideration. The GABLE project financed fee waivers for primary school girls before October 1994 when primary schooling was made free in Malawi. This could well be a more equitable means than scholarship programmes of extending opportunities of secondary education to girls.

5.9 Reducing indirect costs

Providing more flexible school hours, establishing childcare facilities and improving the communities' supplies of fuel and water can all help decrease the opportunity cost of sending girls to school. Part-time and flexible scheduling have been incorporated in World Bank financed projects in Bangladesh, Morocco and Pakistan (Herz et al, 1991). They have already been tried with favourable results in China and India. In 1979-80, a non-formal programme offering night classes in 22 villages in Maharashtra State, India, addressed the problem of non-enrolment of working girls. The classes, aimed at drop outs and those who had never attended school, were held between 7 and 9 a.m, 300 days a year. Local volunteers were recruited as instructors and the curriculum was geared to the community situation. Over a five year period, more than 4,000 children enrolled, 75% of them female and all of them full time workers engaged in household or farm work. The 25% drop out rate in project schools was lower than the average 50-70% grade 1 drop out rate (ibid).

Among interventions to reduce women's work, an important objective of labour saving technologies is to free up girls' time for schooling. Examples are a fuel efficient woodburning stove in Nepal, accessible water wells and simple mechanised grain mills in Burkina Faso. It is hard, however, to assess the impacts of such measures, as they are usually part of a package of school based changes.

To reiterate, the World Bank has found that package approaches which combine a variety of different interventions have been the most effective in improving the access of girls to both primary and secondary schooling. The Fourth Primary Project (1980-86) in Bangladesh addressed both household-level and school-level constraints by improving school facilities, training more female teachers, providing free textbooks, and scholarships for girls. As a result, female enrolments improved 9% annually in project areas compared with only 2% in the country as a whole. In countries where direct costs are high for poor families, subsidies are required. Where poverty is regionally concentrated, careful targeting of such areas is necessary.

CHAPTER 6

GENDER AND ADULT EDUCATION: A MISSING PRIORITY

This chapter will discuss the importance of adult female literacy as a strategy to raise girls' enrolment as well as exploring new forms of educational partnerships.

6.1. The role of NGOs

The delivery of education is not entirely a state monopoly and NGOs have a central role to play. NGOs have the advantage of possessing flexible organisation and management structures and of being oriented towards low cost, cost-effective, community level activities. They are often better placed, therefore, to introduce innovative approaches aimed at improving the participation of girls and women in education and training. The devolution of authority to regional and local governments currently underway in several African countries, also offers the possibility of greater involvement of NGOs in education. It has been widely argued that NGO work in the area of non-formal education (NFE) is vital if the objectives of Education for All (EFA) are to be met (MEDIAnatura, 1995).

Notwithstanding the above mentioned importance and advantages of NGOs, they do encounter a number of problems with regard to educational delivery:

- In general, NGO education projects are small scale while the problems of adult literacy are massive.
- Although their activities tend to be cost-effective, they do often require external funding which is only available to the better known NGOs which have managed to gain access to the international donor community.
- At times, NGOs take on large scale delivery of education which can lead to parallel bureaucracies (such as The Bangladesh Rural Action Committee, BRAC) and relieves the state of its responsibilities to provide such education.
- Where NGOs cooperate with the state, funding can change the nature of their activities, reducing in particular their capacity for effective advocacy.
- NGO literacy initiatives are rarely subject to rigorous critical evaluation.

There is a strong tendency for donor agencies to use national NGOs primarily as client outreach agencies rather than providers of alternative models of education. Fragmentary evidence would suggest that in the area of gender there is a significant difference between the work of mixed and women only NGOs with the latter offering more innovatory approaches and courses not run by government institutions (Stromquist, 1994).

6.2. Adult education and literacy

The goal of achieving Universal Primary Education for all will not be achieved unless the needs of adult learners are addressed as well. Both parents play a crucial role in decisions concerning their children' schooling but the influence of mothers on their daughters' education is particularly important. Once parents are educated themselves, they are more willing and able to see the benefits of educating girls. Action Aid has found adult literacy to be a strong foundation for organising the community into PTAs in support of school and village education committees (Caxton Partnership Conference, 1995). Unfortunately, the link between adult female literacy and girls' enrolment in primary school is not well researched in Africa. However, more generally, Lalage Bown's investigation into the special effects of women's literacy as opposed to girls' schooling concluded that there is enough evidence to show that adult women's literacy brings about changes in attitudes and behaviour which in turn result in social and economic change. She concludes from a number of case studies that womens' literacy has also been a catalyst for positive change in favour of girls' education. For example, in Nepal, an income generating project with a literacy component led to some girls enroling in school for the first time. In Brazil, a literacy project for prostitutes was followed by the women opening a school in a local favela for their own and other local children. In Nepal again, an Action Aid study reported that literate women helped children with their homework (Bown, 1990).

Income generating activities have often been combined in literacy projects aimed at women. Despite the uneven track record of NGOs in terms of income generating projects, evidence from the Caribbean indicates that NGOs have shown more initiative than government bodies in training women in non-traditional skills and opening up employment for them in the informal sector. The same conclusion can be drawn from other regions (McGrath and King, 1995). The arguments for adult literacy, however, have been weakened by lack of effective research and low success rates. As a donor, the World Bank has been influential in shaping the debate. In 1987, the Bank virtually ceased lending for adult literacy, citing the disappointing results of literacy programmes and campaigns (MEDIAnatura, 1995). The World Bank estimates that over the past 30 years, literacy programmes have only had a 12.5% effectiveness rate (Archer and Cottingham, 1995). However, included among these are mainly centrally directed government initiatives and the reasons for their failure are not sufficiently analysed. Nor does the Bank explore the results of many NGO literacy programmes. It is true that government agencies have not fully considered the material and ideological constraints operating against womens' participation.

The international agencies and most other donors, are now all stressing the critical need for increases in primary education provision often coming under the rubric of 'basic education' (World Bank, 1995 and ODA, 1994). This is usually justified on the grounds of equity as well as the beneficial social and economic impacts on girls in terms of health, nutrition, and reduced fertility. The emphasis on primary education has been reinforced by the predilection

of the World Bank and most donor agencies for quantifiable indicators of education output (using rate of return analyses) as measures of success. While primary schooling is certainly more measurable than adult education, it does seem paradoxical that the arguments for primary schooling are not transferred to the education of adult females where basic literacy can be achieved more quickly than four or five years of primary schooling and the impacts of such education are known to be beneficial. Stromquist in her study (1994) of donor agencies and basic education, observes that although adult education has received more attention in the 1990s than before, literacy projects for adult women tend to be very limited in number and conceptualisation. Most agencies show concern for the low literacy levels of adult women yet few programmes are being implemented through bilateral or multilateral assistance The agencies that have traditionally supported adult literacy programmes for women include SIDA, USAID and UNICEF. Most of UNICEFs literacy work takes place in Africa where it has 18 programme with women as the target population (Stromquist, 1994).

A vicious cycle of poverty and illiteracy operates in many rural areas of Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi and other parts of SSA. The low literacy levels of mothers in Zambia has reduced the interest of parents in educating their children, most particularly their daughters. Girls' poor participation in education then leads to semi-literate school leavers who often lapse back into illiteracy before they become the mothers of the new generation (Kelly, 1994). If this cycle is to be broken, female literacy must be addressed simultaneously with encouraging girls' enrolment in school.

The Lock Jumbish and Bundibugyo projects respectively, are good examples of effective NGO interventions in India and Uganda respectively, to improve both adult female literacy and girls primary school enrolment in different cultural settings. The Lock Jumbish project is a good example of NGO action based on the close integration of non-formal and formal education in the Indian case.

6.3. Lok Jumbish - Rajistan.

Rajistan is one of the poorest states in India. It has the lowest literacy rate in the country for women (21%) and in over 90% of its districts, literacy levels are below 40%. At the start of the project, the primary school enrolment rates for boys were estimated to be around 60% and between 25-30% for girls in the administrative blocks covered by the project. The main educational problems in Rajistan are high drop out rates for girls and chronic teacher absenteeism rather than the availability of schools per se. More generally, the caste system strongly discriminates against girls. After the *Education for All* Conference, a series of programmes were started in India including a national literacy campaign known as the Total Literacy Campaign (TLC) which was begun in Kerala in 1990 and this was soon extended to many parts of the country. The Indian government is using these literacy campaigns as a basis for mobilising support for greater school enrolment (John with Lalita, 1994).

In Rajistan, a complementary programme called Lok Jumbish (meaning Peoples' Movement) has been established. The goals of LJ are: (1) to move towards universalisation of primary education (UPE). (The project considers that the indicator of universalisation should be the completion by girls of five years of education); and (2) To change the entire gender situation not only by increasing the ratio of girls in relation to boys but also the way in which men regard girls' education and women's status in society. However, soon after the start of the project (which is co-funded by SIDA and the Rajistan state government), it was soon realised that broader issues concerning social and gender inequalities had to be addressed in the communities to ensure success. As a result, LJ now attempts to mobilise the whole village in order to realise its main educational objectives. In particular, education provision for adults and children is tackled simultaneously, and, like the national literacy campaign, this involves a novel collaboration between government ministries and NGOs (MEDIAnatura, 1995). The management of LJ is in the hands of a completely autonomous and independent body called Lok Jumbish Parishad which is completely decentralised. All decisions are made on the basis of proposals which come from the village while all sanctions are made at the block level. This reduces the usual system of patronage in the establishment of schools. LJ's area of operation is wide; the second phase of the project (which started 1995) will cover 75 blocks with a population of 12 million mainly rural people.

School mapping is done by a method of survey and school location by the village community itself, not by administrators. Registers are kept in every village in which school mapping is done and the name of every child is recorded on a register while their progress is monitored by a village group every six months. If a child does not go to school for three or four days, the teacher must contact the parents. Non-formal education is also provided for child labourers who cannot attend school. LJ is implemented in a diversified manner in response to the particular needs of communities. For example, when girls in villages where there is no school (beyond class 5), were not able to travel to another village, LJ set up inexpensive hostels for the girls so that they could stay in villages which have upper primary schools (Caxton Partnership Conference, 1995).

The assumption behind the project is that girls are not receiving an equal education because of their inferior social status. Consequently, changing attitudes is an integral part of the LJ project, which aims to meet women and girls' practical gender needs in terms of provision of education whilst also addressing their strategic gender needs (i.e. working to overcome their subordination to men and thus trying to change the social order in the long run). LJ has helped to create strong women's groups in every village which are demanding equal rights with men. Targeting of girls and women from scheduled castes allows the use of resources to help remove social inequalities. It is hoped that this raising of consciousness and organisation around gender issues will lead to more positive attitudes towards the education and training of girls and women, particularly in the areas of primary education and adult literacy.

Girls are given both direct and indirect support in order to continue their schooling. If uniforms or accommodation are a problem, these are provided. LJ also seeks to bring about the necessary changes in the content and process of education with regard to curriculum, teacher training and classroom practices. The aim is not only to eliminate stereotyping of women's traditional roles but to help both boys and girls to look at their respective statuses. Teacher training is an integral part of the project which ensures that there are sufficient numbers of women teachers. These teachers are organised into a 'Women' Forum'. In some of the less developed districts, LJ has set up education centres to educate women in basic literacy in order that they can work as activists in the communities which have high proportion of illiterate women.

LJ has had to invest heavily in school infrastructure, although this consists mainly of repairing existing buildings. The project has also tried to raise the level of training and, therefore, status of all teachers as well as introducing child-centred text books. LJ wishes to raise the quality of educational provision in both formal and non-formal sectors. Of their 1000 non-formal schools, only 2% are said to be 'dysfunctional'.

To date, the impact of the LJ project has been impressive. Since August 1992 there has been a 10% improvement in effective enrolment and a substantial decrease in the drop out rate (Caxton Partnership Conference, 1995). At both the block and village level, LJ is trying to ensure that local organisations which have been created can be sustained and strengthened. LJ is creating a new management system and integrating this with the state management structures in education. The project provides, therefore, an excellent illustration of the potential for NGO/state collaboration in raising the quality of education through community based change and quickly raising girls' and women' participation rates in both formal and non-formal sectors of education. All this is being done in an unpromising social context.

Suitably modified, there is no reason why some of all of the following key features of the LJ project could not be replicated in the Southern African context:

- Effective NGO-state collaboration.
- A focus on improving the quality of education by changing both the content and process of education.
- Local communities closely involved in the design of educational programmes from the outset.
- Flexible management structure.
- Simultaneously addressing the learning needs of girls and women both in and out of school by the provision of formal and non-formal education with flexible hours (this includes the provision of literacy classes).
- Helping to improve the decision making capacities of women by encouraging adult literacy and leadership skills for women in the community.

6.4. Bundibugyo-Uganda

Action Aid (AA), which was founded in 1972, now works in 20 countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America. For much of the 1970s and 1980s its education programme focused on building schools in order to improve access. However, this approach was not successful and AA now concentrates on improving the quality of education through curriculum development, inservice teacher training and pre-schools. All this is being done in the context of developing reciprocal relationships with groups in the communities.

Adult literacy is a relatively new area of concern and AA is currently piloting an alternative technology for literacy which it terms Regenerated Freirean Literacy (REFLECT) in Uganda, Bangladesh and El Salvador. AA began research on adult literacy in Uganda in 1992, and its operational project was established a year later in Bundibugyo, (one of the country's 39 political units) in a remote part of western Uganda known as Bwamba. The economy of Bwamba consists of a large number of self-sufficient family farms, operating mainly at subsistence level. Women have a low status and are not allowed to speak before men, access to land comes through men who retain the proceeds of any cash crops (most notably coffee) that the women cultivate (Cottingham,1995). Four parishes out of ten in the district were chosen for the pilot project on the grounds of need. This area has extremely low levels of school enrolment and high rates of female illiteracy.

The aim of the Bundibugyo project is to target women (as the poorest and least powerful members of the community) with an activity which would empower them to take control of their own development. To this end, the REFLECT methodology draws upon a set of research techniques known as participatory rural appraisal (PRA) in which the learners, rather than having pre-printed materials, develop their own materials through the construction of local maps. These can be household maps, or maps of local crops, tenancy or health problems. A whole range of different maps, calendars, matrixes and diagrams are developed by the literacy facilitators and learners in order to analyse power relations in the community. Each literacy circle then constructs its own material and ends up with a diagnosis of their own community by systematising their own existing knowledge.

The first literacy students were enrolled in January 1994 (the majority being women) with approximately 30 in each class and an age range of between 18 and 80 years. A pre-literacy campaign with a local 'ngoma' group served to raise community awareness at the start of the project. Women were both self-selecting and also positively encouraged to enrol. The learners constructed their own shelters out of spear grass. The 65 facilitators were mostly men because the applicants (nominated by the community) were required to be educated themselves. The initial training lasted ten days and consisted of PRA activities followed by practice with the units - especially the link with literacy and numeracy. The facilitators work officially for the parish councils and they are imbued with respect for the learners. Facilitators form

Parish Groups and participate in fortnightly training sessions to exchange experiences. One week refresher courses are run every six months. Facilitators are supposed to act as 'role models' for the learning groups. Other support from AA consists of visits by fieldworkers.

AA supports the project by funding incentive payments to facilitators, and providing a manual, a set of visual cards, a blackboard and some large pieces of paper for facilitators. Given the lack of reading materials, AA has also gradually fed in the following material: a pamphlet on micro-projects, a book on civic life and a health booklet. These have all been specially written and produced for the new literates by the local literacy coordinator. In addition, learners have been keen to contribute to a newsletter, especially with articles from their oral traditions. Newsletters and production of printed materials within the communities themselves help to promote a more literate environment.

An internal evaluation of REFLECT was completed by Sara Cottingham (an AA staff member) in April 1995. The evaluation sampled 40% of the classes. The project's action points during the year were wide ranging with the strongest areas of change being noted in agriculture and health. Men were reported to be sharing more work with their wives and trying to space children. The evaluation found that the most successful aspect of the literacy programme was its contribution to practical changes in learner's lives. A particular weakness of the REFLECT methodology is that, given that the course is cumulative, there is inadequate provision for sporadic non-attendance. Nonetheless, after one year (with a typical attendance of 100 hours), the average REFLECT learner can read a paragraph aloud and understand it, write a short letter on a familiar topic, and copy and calculate using the four signs. However, the training in numeracy has been less effective (Cottingham, 1995). Sixty-three learners considered themselves very satisfied with the following parts of the course in order of importance: agricultural knowledge 82%, health protection 74%, self-confidence 72%, problem solving 66% and signing official documents 65%. Response differences between men and women were not significant.

In its first year of operation (1994-5), the project achieved relatively high rates of learner retention viz. 67% of the 1,763 originally enrolled. It is expected that most will go on to a post-literacy class. Each literacy group has also shown the capacity for analysing problems collectively. All the groups sampled had taken at least one joint action in addition to numerous individual initiatives, most commonly setting up tree nurseries and schools for young children and organising family planning. Finally, a number of income generating projects have also been started by groups of learners. In general, an increased capacity for collective action has emerged from the REFLECT process.

The project's impact on schooling for children is especially difficult to assess after only a year of operation. A high priority is placed by learners on children's education generally, although the evaluation notes that there are no significant changes in negative attitudes towards the enrolment of girls. However, several communities involved with the scheme have established their own primary schools. Enrolment rates are reported to have risen since the inception of REFLECT (Sarah Cottingham, personal communication).

More generally, the evaluation found that, in a very short time, there appear to be signs of changes in male attitudes towards women's' subservient roles. The conclusion of both male and female learners from the 'gender workload calendar' was that a responsible husband should take on some of the tasks previously assigned to wives. This can be seen as a useful entry point into gender inequality although there is still a long way to go. The raised awareness of learners after only one year of the REFLECT course is extremely positive and if the women come to value education it is likely that this will have spin off effects on their daughter's chances of education in the long run. Clearly, the challenge for this project is to sustain its early progress.

6.5. Lessons for Southern Africa

There are strong similarities between Bundibugyo and rural Southern Africa, particularly southern Malawi where female adult literacy rates are extremely low and often about half those of men. Unless the general environment becomes more literate, the danger is that the new literates lose their skills over time. Although it is too early to fully assess the REFLECT programme in Uganda, the apparently substantial gains in terms of raised consciousness concerning vital issues such as health and agriculture and the renewed parental interest in educating their children could bode well for increasing girl's chances of getting an education.

Any kind of replication would involve a prior research project, possibly using Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) to determine levels of need and type of demand for literacy/adult education. This approach could be integrated with the ODA Community Schools Project (CSP) which is based on community mobilisation and raising awareness around the importance of educating girls. The CSP facilities themselves could be used for adult education programmes out of hours, the content being determined by the communities themselves.

In Malawi, women have a very limited involvement in decision making. The CSP project insists upon a certain proportion of the school committee being made up of women (ODA, CPS, 1994). However, there is a strong likelihood that if most of these women remain illiterate, they will be passive observers rather than active participants in the community projects. Literacy is a pre-requisite for active political participation and any scheme that intends to promote female education must address wider issues of empowerment as well. It has been pointed out that if more women were enabled to play political roles it would greatly enhance prospects of radical reorientation and extension of education (Brock and Cammish, 1991). The lessons from earlier

literacy programmes in Malawi point to the importance of designing programmes which consider the constraints on women's time and prioritise the acquisition of skills for which the learners themselves express a need (Baden and Green, 1994). The focus on providing basic literacy and numeracy skills for women, (leading possibly to income generating activities) could contribute to both girls' education and the process of democratisation.

CHAPTER 7

GOVERNMENT AND DONOR INTERVENTIONS

7.1. Introduction

As elsewhere, when it comes to designing specific policies to redress gender inequalities in education in SSA, cost considerations are a central issue. The World Bank considers that a mix of various measures to promote girls' participation will require some additional cost but that it is difficult to estimate what these might be. The key question is whether low cost options could make a significant difference to the overall problem of gender inequality in education. To some extent this depends on the goals and priorities of policy makers and communities and how decisions on education spending are made. Herz concludes on a cautious note in this regard: 'country level project experience on what works to improve girls' enrolments is too recent to draw firm conclusions. Many projects were more successful at providing more appealing types of schooling than in addressing household or labour market constraints' (Herz et al, 1991:57). It would seem that various strategies have succeeded in raising the enrolment of girls although, as we can see from our Southern African examples, to improve retention and performance on a lasting basis seems to be more of a challenge.

UNICEF has recently recommended that Universal Primary Education (UPE) should be promoted by governments, and that at least 20% of children should proceed to secondary school (Fay Chung, at CAMFED Conference,1995). Equality of access and process for girls and women are equally important at all levels of the education system. Even if many girls do manage to complete their primary schooling, (as in Zambia and Zimbabwe), they perform far worse than boys in almost every subject except language, and they do particularly badly in maths and science which are essential for many vocationally oriented careers. It is not surprising, therefore, that the small proportion (less than 30%) in all three countries of the female students at universities are mainly concentrated in teaching, arts and humanities. In other words, girls are under-represented in all areas of education except primary. Equally serious, the literacy rates among adult females in all three countries are considerably lower than those of males, this applies especially in rural districts. Malawi's female literacy rate is one of the lowest in Africa.

All three countries have, over the past few years, officially committed themselves to reducing in the gender gaps in education and taken action to promote equality of opportunity, often in collaboration with international aid donors. The governments of Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe have recently taken active and practical steps to redress gender imbalances in their education systems.

7.2. Malawi

The new government in Malawi has made poverty alleviation its first priority and provision of basic education is a key component of its poverty alleviation strategy. A comprehensive education sector policy analysis was conducted in April 1994 which identified the key constraints as insufficient resources allocated to education, the primary sub-sector in particular, and to learning materials to support the free universal primary education policy. The report also identified insufficient persistence and achievement of girls through primary education, compounded by the poor quality of educational delivery including inadequate numbers of classrooms, teachers and learning materials and a number of inefficiencies in the primary system (GABLE,1995). USAID amended its aid programme to support the Government of Malawi (GOM) in addressing these constraints.

Access to primary education has expanded rapidly since the decision to waive school fees was made in October 1994. In order to further reduce the parental costs of primary schooling, uniforms are now longer required. As a result of free primary education, girls' enrolment in Standard 2 now surpasses that of boys. The government introduced a quota of 33% as far back as the 1960's for girls entering secondary school. Due to the restricted nature of provision and low levels of spending on education, this did not improve access to secondary school. However, in 1994, an admissions policy of 1:1 boys to girls was established in government district secondary schools which has apparently improved girls' access (Chipembere, 1995).

HIV/AIDS awareness has been integrated into the school curriculum of all primary and secondary schools. However, HIV/AIDS prevention work needs to address men's attitudes and behaviour and in the longer term create alternative economic opportunities for women (Baden and Green, 1994).

There are currently two major donor funded projects that seek to increase the enrolment of all children, but particularly girls at primary schools.

7.2.1. The GABLE Project

The USAID funded GABLE project was designed and authorised in 1991. It is a five year project and is a combination of non-programme and programme aid totalling $20 million ($14 million in NPA and $6 million in PA). GABLE's overall objective is to increase girls' attainment (defined as access, persistence and completion) by achieving widespread improvements in primary education and addressing widely held attitudes which place a low value on the education of girls specifically. The central goal underpinning this project is to reduce fertility in Malawi, the impact of which will be measured by the following indicators: a decline in total fertility from 6.7% in 1993 to 6.0% by 1998; an increase in the mean age of women at first birth from 19 in 1993 to 21 in 1998 and; an increased interval between births such that the percentage of births spaced less than two years apart declines from 21% in 1993 to 15% in 1998 (GABLE, 1995).

During the last three years, the government has increased the share of the education budget in overall public expenditure and, within the education sector itself, the share of expenditure devoted to primary schooling has increased significantly. Actual expenditures on education as a proportion of GOM budget rose from 13.1% in 1991/2 to 17.5% in 1993/4 while the share of primary education as a percentage of education expenditure rose from 50.4% to 54.5% over the same period (GABLE, 1995). In addition, specific measures to increase access and improve persistence of girls in primary education, such as school fee waivers for non-repeating girls have been introduced.

As part of the GABLE project, a Social Mobilisation Campaign has been launched to change attitudes and elicit support of parents and communities to educate girls. Other initiatives include a Primary Pupil Registration system to provide essential information concerning the flow and performance of students throughout the standards; competitive procedures for the procurement and distribution of learning materials in order to provide more at a lower cost; revision of the primary school curriculum so that it is more gender sensitive; and a pilot programme through Save the Children Federation (a U.S. based NGO), to test new approaches to community participation in primary education. More recently, GABLE has extended scholarships to disadvantaged girls for secondary schooling.

The GABLE Social Mobilisation Campaign to convince parents of the benefits of sending their girls to school is about to enter its second phase. The campaign phase in Machinga followed the pilot study by Hyde and Kadzamira (1994). In this campaign heavy reliance is being placed on participatory research and participatory theatre, as well as focused group discussions with parents, girls, boys, community leaders, and teachers led by community development assistants (Kadzamira, personal communication,1995).

The GABLE project has claimed considerable success during the first phase. Waivers for non-repeating girls benefited approximately half a million girls each year. Between 1991 and 1992 girls' enrolment increased twice as much as that of boys, so that 55% of school aged girls are now enrolled. (However it should be recalled that in October 1994, primary education fees were withdrawn by GOM). Substantial progress has been made in revising the curriculum in Standard 1-4 so that it is more gender sensitive. Research has shown that distance is an important factor inhibiting girls' school attendance. For this reason, GABLE II will support the establishment of community primary schools that will bring education closer to young children. These schools will accommodate the four lower standards of primary school and will be managed by the local community. Qualified female teachers will be recruited to these schools. The main emphasis, therefore, in GABLE II, is to improve the quality of education as well as provide more primary school facilities located close to the communities that need them. Although GABLE claim success for their first phase, it is certainly too early to reach firm conclusions about its overall impact on girls' education, particularly as the second phase is only just underway.

7.2.2 The Malawi Primary Community Schools Project (ODA)

The ODA's 1993 Country Strategy Paper with its strong emphasis on poverty alleviation and human development identified primary education as a high priority for British aid to Malawi. This project has been designed to develop and disseminate cost-effective and replicable approaches for the delivery of primary education. A key objective is to develop effective learning strategies suited to the realities of schools in rural and peri-urban Malawi by implementing a new style of MOE-community partnership in 100 new community schools. Children completing four years of education at these schools will acquire basic literacy and numeracy. The project emphasises whole school effectiveness which is proxied by a repetition rate target of 5% and a completion rate of 90%. The project will provide 48,000 new places in Standards 1-4 by 1999. Special consideration is being given to the needs of girls.

The community schools will be integrated into the existing primary system under the administration of District Education Offices. Community schools established under the project will have the following basic characteristics:

- Serve clearly defined disadvantaged communities in all parts of the country.
- Operate up to Standard 4 - a minimum requirement for the attainment of basic literacy
- Be integral parts of the national primary education system enabling children to move on to the second four year cycle of primary education.
- Involve the community in school building, design and construction and, through a school management committee, in the management of the school and in provision of appropriate and available resources.
- Adopt a child centred teaching method taking into account the needs of both boys and girls.
- Serve as places for community activity outside of school hours.
- Be built to simple, low cost, Ministry approved specifications paying close attention to the availability of water and good sanitation.

It is envisaged that community schools will have two streams. The impact of class size has implications for an open access policy and defining catchment areas. The MOE's target pupil:teacher ration of 60:1 will provide the basis for discussion.

Teachers appointed to community schools from within school communities will receive pre-service teacher training appropriate to their experience. An INSET programme for teachers will also be designed which will involve the inspectorate. Non-teaching headteachers will be trained for school management and community liaison and in-set responsibilities. The administrative capacity of the Ministry with regard to community schools at the District Level will be strengthened through training. Furthermore, the community schools will develop strategies for good practice in respect of girls' education, in particular by taking account of the circumstances of girls

in the community and of prevailing parental attitudes. Women will be encouraged to be committee members. If appropriate, there will be flexibility in respect of school calendars and timetabling to promote attendance. Pre-service and in-service teacher training will incorporate gender training. Women teachers will be encouraged and supported to serve in community schools and to benefit from in-service training. The innovative experience of community schools will be monitored carefully (ODA, CSP, 1994).

Lessons about how to support girls and women teachers in schools can be disseminated widely throughout the primary system. The CSP is a process project with three distinct phases:

1st phase (1995/6): Communities are identified, sensitised, consulted and involved in the process of school development and management to develop a strategic plan for the whole project. During the second phase (1996-99), up to 100 community schools will be established taking account of all aspects of school development: including construction staffing, learning materials, management and financing. A joint review which will determine the design of the third phase (ODA, CSP, 1994).

The challenge facing Malawi is to expand enrolments rapidly while at the same time providing education of sufficient quality that parents will not only send their girls to school but ensure that they complete their education. Both GABLE and the ODA funded projects involve transforming community attitudes towards schooling. However, in my view this cannot be done effectively without introducing an adult education component. In a country with such low rates of female literacy, the desired objective of community involvement in decision making around education will not be achieved if the active participants continue to be men. Similarly, in Zimbabwe, while CAMFED insists (as the ODA will do with regard to the community schools) that women are well represented on committees, apparently these women are passive and rarely participate in discussions (Ann Cotton, personal communication). The only way to ensure that mothers value education for their daughters is to provide some kind of literacy and/or income generating training which will endow them with skills so that they may be active participants in community decision making.

7.3 Zambia

The basic causes of the educational crisis in Zambia are economic decline, lack of resources and institutional inefficiencies. The Ministry of Education's new National Policy on Education is directed towards an environment within which quality, efficiency and accountability will be the benchmarks of educational provision (UNICEFb, 1995). In its recent policy paper on education, the Republic of Zambia has committed itself to the liberalisation and decentralisation of its education system. The paper refers to the rapid population growth and unfavourable economic conditions that have led to a serious decline in the quality of education. The new education policy seeks to make the education sector more responsive to the needs of individual

learners and the labour market and to ensure collaboration between government institutions, NGOs and industry. It also advocates a rationalised cost-sharing system between the state, beneficiaries and communities.

In the short term, the ROZ intends to:

- Bring primary completion rates up to 100%. Basic education will cover a nine year period, running from grades 1 to 9.
- Strengthen continuing education as a second channel to a nine year basic education.
- Achieve gender equity in school enrolment and in management posts at all levels.

The lack of school places is identified as a major problem for the education system in Zambia, particularly at the secondary level. The government is committed to providing better educational infrastructure in the form of new schools and training institutions with the provision of adequate running water and sanitary facilities. It will also repair existing facilities. A user levy will be employed to expand infrastructure (ROZ, 1995). However, introducing user charges in education such as levies will negatively affect girls' access and persistence.

The government has adopted the following measures with regard to equity and girls' education:

- Remove gender disparity in both access, progression and accomplishment at all levels of the education system.
- Review and enforce penalties against school pupils, teachers and other educational personnel engaging in sexual harassment and making school girls pregnant.
- Effect legislation which will make it a punishable offence for parents and guardians who withdraw children from school prematurely.
- Continue to admit girls to secondary school with lower grades than boys.
- Create more boarding places for girls.
- Establish special bursary schemes for girls.
- Readmit girls who are forced out of school prematurely.
- Introduce legislation making it a punishable offence for any adult who has carnal knowledge of a pupil.
- Strengthen and reorient guidance and counselling programmes which address the social/cultural problems which may hinder the progress of girls in education.
- Enhance enrolment of female teacher trainees in science, mathematics and technical subjects.
- Liaise with Ministries, NGOs and other stakeholders on the need to influence parents/guardians to release girls from domestic chores in order for them to have time to study (ibid).

Bursary schemes will also be introduced, particularly for girls and these awards will be directed at those girls who excel in industrial arts, sciences and mathematics. The government has also set a number of targets to improve the quality of education which would have an indirect affect on girls' educational outcomes: setting of standards and guidelines for early childhood education, limiting enrolment to 40 pupils per class at the primary level and 35 at the secondary level; a pupil-textbook ratio of 1:1 and 1:5 for supplementary reading materials at all grade levels; improvements in the teacher/inspector ratio to internationally accepted standards and; establish performance indicators as guides for monitoring standards and quality of education.

To date there has not been a great deal of donor activity in Zambia aimed directly at promoting girls' education. A number of donor projects directed at raising the quality of education could, however, have the effect of encouraging the participation of girls. One such project funded by the ODA, is the Action for Improving English, Mathematics and Science (AIEMS) project. This project is designed to improve the quality of the learning environment in all primary and secondary schools in Zambia in: English, mathematics and science by strengthening and further developing the existing system of in-service education and training (INSET) and by establishing mechanisms to increase and maintain supplies of learning materials (ODA, project description). The UNICEF 'Adolescent Girl Child Initiative described below is already operating in Zambia. The project proposal for the girls child will concentrate most of its resources and activities on redressing the problems of gender inequality in education and demonstrating results in selected primary schools (UNICEFb, 1995). The goals of phase II of the 'Proposal for Girl Child Education' are:

- To promote and create public awareness of the importance of girls' education, participation and empowerment at the national level, within the framework of the EFA programme.
- To support the MOE to monitor nationally and analyse data on girls' education.
- To improve the efficiency and effectiveness of classroom practices in providing learners, especially girls with the basic competencies in two provinces, Eastern and Lusaka.
- To implement specific interventions that directly impact on access, retention and achievement of girls in selected schools in Eastern and Lusaka provinces (ibid).

7.4 Zimbabwe

To overcome the racial imbalance in education provision during the colonial and UDI periods, Zimbabwe adopted a policy of education as a basic human right in 1980. The resulting rapid expansion of education provision brought Zimbabwe close to achieving the goal of Universal Primary Education, but this was not without its costs. The quality of education fell in the 1980s as pupil-teacher ratios increased and expenditure per pupil dropped. Overcoming these

problems has diverted attention from questions of relevance, gender equity and community based initiatives, including early childhood education which lagged behind. The challenge of the 1990s is to improve the quality and relevance of educational provision (UNICEF, 1994).

The Government of Zimbabwe, in collaboration with international aid donors has recently taken steps to address directly the question of gender inequity in education. The overall aim of current education policy is to upgrade the quality and relevance of primary school education and increase the proportion of trained teachers from 64% to 80%. Bringing about gender equity throughout the system is a goal of the National Programme of Action for Children (NPA) which is assisted by UNICEF. The programme has three major components - community based education, (initiated through the early childhood education and care and adult literacy programmes), quality and relevance of basic education, and gender equity. The gender equity programme focuses on the following areas:

- A Social Development Fund (SDF) has been established in order to ameliorate the economic constraints that adversely affect the participation women and 'vulnerable groups'. The Fund assists pupils whose parents are unable to pay either primary or secondary tuition fees. (However, its implementation has been dogged by bureaucratic and logistical problems so that particularly those poorer groups living in rural areas have been unable to make use of the fund.) The use of this fund offers the possibility of assisting both girls and boys.
- The removal of gender stereotyping in school textbooks along with training teachers to be gender sensitive. The aim is to effect positive changes with regard to teacher attitudes towards the education of boys and girls and patterns of role ascription.
- The strengthening and training of the School Development Committees (SDCs) to enable them to take an increasingly important role in the planning and management of the education system at the local level. Parents, educational administrators and teacher trainees are to be sensitised on gender issues and convinced of the benefits of girls' education through workshops organised through the SDCs (UNICEF, 1994).
- In conjunction with various donors (including NGOs), the award of scholarships and bursaries to girls, (and particularly the poor and gifted) in the hope that their success will influence others.
- Relaxing conditions and criteria for girls admission to certain levels of education by means of positive discrimination, which involves a quota system at advanced level and university education.
- Giving pregnant school girls a chance to go back to school after delivering and nursing the baby.
- Family life education will be maintained in the curriculum to cultivate children's awareness of their sexuality and to help them avoid early marriages, teenage pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS.
- Giving female teachers priority in promotions so that they can become

role models for girls to emulate and aspire to similar or better achievement.

UNICEF sees gender sensitising as almost pure advocacy for the girl child. In Zimbabwe, this advocacy will involve mass media campaigns directed at rural populations to encourage girls to go to school. A number of ministries will be involved in the gender equity project apart from the MEC. UNICEF is the main donor supporting this programme, although close links will be maintained with other donors working in the field of education, notably CIDA, CODE, UNESCO, SIDA, World Bank, Netherlands Government and the Bernard van Leer Foundation (UNICEF, 1993).

SIDA has for some time played a central role in supporting Zimbabwe's education sector. The current agreement between SIDA and the GOZ ends in 1995. It will be replaced by a more concentrated programme in which gender concerns are paramount. For example, the gender aspects of education management will have their own budget for training in gender planning. The school building and rehabilitation programmes in the communal areas will be continued as they have helped to increase enrolment and participation, especially for girls. The secondary school scholarship programmes for children from these areas will also continue with the scholarships being disbursed at a 4:1 ratio in favour of girls. The areas of maths and science education for girls have been highlighted and the current development support will be mainly concentrated in these subjects. SIDA is also exploring the possibility of offering education support through NGOs which, it is hoped, could improve the quality of education and thereby attract more girls to school. In this respect, they are likely to draw on their experience of working with NGOs in India and Bangladesh (McNab and Sundberg, 1995).

7.5 Regional and continent wide donor initiatives

7.5.1 UNICEF

UNICEF is playing a major role in East and Southern Africa in developing initiatives both to support the education of girls and to change negative attitudes towards girls and women more generally. UNICEF took a decision in 1993 to concentrate on primary education and its approach is innovative in that it considers both formal and non-formal ways of providing education. UNICEF has recently launched a significant new project, the Adolescent Girl Communication Initiative which is being organised in 10 participating countries (Botswana, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe). This regional communication package on female children in the Eastern and Southern African region (ESAR) is an attempt to confront attitudes giving rise to gender discrimination at all levels which affect girls children's education, access to health care and social services as well as workloads in the home and outside. The view of UNICEF is that women and girls are increasingly caught between two worlds, no longer offered the protection of traditional society nor armed

with the confidence, skills and knowledge to meet the demands of a changing world. UNICEF, in developing this project in ESAR has decided to follow some elements of the successful 'Meena Communication Initiative' of South Asia.

UNICEF argues that the complexity of factors required for successful behaviour change indicates the need for a multi-media approach (with a heavy emphasis on film and video) which will be aimed at capturing the attention of the public in these ten countries. The general objectives of this communication package on the girl child are as follows:

- Support the social mobilisation process designed to realised the potential of female children and to foster their participation in development;
- Create awareness and advocate for the reduction of existing disparities in the status and treatment of girls;
- Produce a dynamic role model for girls through which they can acquire self-esteem and learn life skills essential for empowerment;
- Provide a model for improved relationships between the sexes, beginning at an early age;
- Communicate information regarding the survival, protection and development of girl children, including specific messages on her education, health and nutrition;
- Bring major international broadcast and production establishments into social development activities and build a sustainable base for the initiative.

Since February 1994, twelve regional UNICEF offices in ESAR have expressed interest in supporting the project by acting as research bases, supplying research and artistic talent for the regional design process. Through Phase I, media access information will be gathered through the region to determine the most effective media to be utilised. Phase II will entail taking the initiative to scale through the production and dissemination of stories on other priority themes in multi-media, widescale dissemination by each participating country and creation of partnerships with international media firms and broadcast networks. The launching of this major initiative took place in October 1994 at a workshop in Machakos, Kenya. The twelve participating countries identified researchers, gender specialists, educationalists, producers and artists from their countries to participate. UNICEF's methods are to ensure that behavioural change is linked with the empowerment of girls (see UNICEF 1995a).

UNICEF also operates a 'Girls' Education Programme' in 15 countries of SSA, the countries covered in ESARO include Mozambique, Malawi, Zimbabwe, Zambia and Eritrea. The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) is currently the main bi-lateral donor to this programme which is at different stages of development in the respective countries.

7.5.2 The Forum of African Women Educationalists (FAWE)

FAWE, founded in 1992, is a membership organisation which brings together

African women ministers in charge of national education systems, women vice-chancellors of universities in Africa and other senior women policy makers in education. The Rockerfeller Foundation supported its founding activities. Its goals are:

- Mainstreaming gender concerns into national education programmes.
- Convincing society, governments, donors and NGO's of the need to invest more resources in girls' education.
- Supporting women administrators, researchers and teachers so that they in turn can impact positively on female education.
- Integrating gender studies into tertiary research, curriculum, and policy decisions (FAWE Newsletter, Nov. 1993, p.2).

The current FAWE membership consists of thirty two members from 25 African countries. This influential forum of women policy makers is well positioned to stimulate education policy reform in order to create a conducive environment for increasing parental demand for girls' education. Underpinning the work of FAWE is an explicit effort to contribute towards the achievement of EFA goals. FAWE is registered in Kenya as a non-profit making NGO and is headed by an Executive Director whose work is guided by an Executive Committee comprising eleven members. The small secretariat is assisted by a twelve person technical committee of leading scholars in Africa, and by well known international social scientists and education specialists who serve as consultants. FAWE works closely with and seeks support from the Donors to African Education (DAE) secretariat in Paris.

FAWE's terms of reference include the following: identification of a practical approach to female drop outs; creating linkages between research and education policy making; identifying relevant policy questions and priorities to which research should be directed; ascertaining the state of, and developing mechanisms for strengthening the capacities in ministries, universities and research units for the analysis and development of policy and action on female education and; identification of ways of maximising the utilisation of resources within the overall education system. In the countries where FAWE operates it collects data on female education and networks around the central issues affecting girls (FAWE Information Booklet, 1994).

FAWE is both a think tank and a pressure group. Its work covers five main areas: strategic resource planning; seed grants to innovative country experiments; awards for innovators; targeted capacity building and leadership programmes; and advocacy and public education. Achievements to date include supporting the gender sensitisation of the Government White Paper on Education by the Uganda Association of University Women; a gender sensitisation workshop by the Seychelles Association of Women Professionals; a successful ministerial consultation held in collaboration with the Mauritius Ministry of Education on 'School drop out and adolescent pregnancy'; and in 1994 coordinating the Africa education input to the 1995 World Conference on Women in Beijing (Odaga and Heneveld, 1995 and DAE Vol 6, No 4,Oct-Dec. 1994).

7.5.3. The Donors to African Education (DAE)

Inter-donor cooperation in education and educational research is increasingly common both at a regional and country level. An example of this move towards greater donor collaboration is the DAE. Prompted by the need for educational improvements in Africa, several agencies came together in 1988 to form DAE which at present comprises about 40 international, national and private agencies. It has its own secretariat in Paris and is organised around ten task forces (ibid). One of these initiated in 1990 is the 'Working group on female participation' composed of 23 multilateral and bilateral funding agencies which together, in cooperation with African education officials and academics, seek means for developing education policies to increase the enrolment of girls in school and enrich their learning experience. The organisation also supports research in the following areas: the determinants of female participation, interventions that work, cooperating with women's indigenous organisations in promoting women's education, and promoting the participation of girls in science and mathematics at secondary schools. The most dynamic element of the working group is FAWE (ibid). Another sub-committee led by CIDA will look at the role of NGOs in promoting and providing for girls' education. In 1995 this is just beginning to get underway.

CONCLUSION

The importance of educating girls is now widely accepted by most governments and aid donors in Sub-Saharan Africa SSA and confirmed by the World Declaration on Education for All (EFA) in 1990. The considerable private and social benefits of girls' education in terms of health and education are well known and documented. The case has been made for such calculations to be made on wider grounds than 'rates of return' estimates which are, in any event, seriously flawed. Despite this knowledge and experience, there appears to be a lack of political will to push forward educational programmes for girls and women. While governments have formally committed themselves to promoting girls' education, the profound crisis currently affecting the social sectors in SSA, exacerbated by structural adjustment programmes has weakened the translation of gender policies into practice.

Since the early 1980s, in Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe, as in many other SSA countries, the overall gap between male and female enrolments at the primary level has narrowed substantially. The gender gap in enrolments tends to widen at secondary and tertiary levels. There has, however, been some absolute decline in primary GERs in both Zambia and Zimbabwe since 1985 due to financial constraints imposed on households by adjustment programmes. Furthermore, overall enrolment statistics disguise serious gender disparities in terms of schooling and literacy found in rural areas. Even in areas where there is enrolment parity between male and female, the education outcomes are poorer for girls. The declining quality of education, along with cost recovery policies in some countries, tends to affect girls more than boys. If parents are faced with a choice of which child to withdraw from school, it will invariably be the girl. Investing in the education of boys is often seen as more worthwhile for social as well as economic reasons.

Substantial progress has been made (especially from the late 1980s) in the development of gender policies for basic education in many developing countries. The main focus of donor attention has been to improve the access and retention of girls in school. Most interventions to redress gender inequalities have addressed 'demand' and 'supply' factors or a combination of the two in 'package' programmes. On the demand side, interventions include: the introduction of bursaries, scholarships and fee waiver programmes, reducing the distance between school and home, and increasing community participation in schools. Commonly adopted supply side policies are: the deployment of more female teachers (especially in science), providing gender sensitive textbooks, and introducing flexible hours. However, the relative merits of these interventions remain unclear in the long run.

At the political level, the following measures have been taken by some governments: creating a more favourable environment to support women and the poor through policy review, adjusting the legal status of women and changing policies on school girl pregnancy (Odaga and Heneveld).

The economic framework of demand and supply has helped in the development of some useful strategies for addressing some of the shortcomings in girls' education in developing countries but it does have limitations. In particular, it cannot adequately explain the complex web of relations between household, community and school. The factors militating against the education of African girls are political, social and economic. The high incidence of teenage pregnancies and HIV infection of girls in both primary and secondary school in all three countries, can only be explained by using a broader conceptual framework that captures the complex inter-relationships between class, power and culture as well as economics.

In the absence of such an understanding, gender problems and solutions have tended to be depoliticised and prescriptions often confuse what is desirable with what is feasible. A better understanding of the multiple sources of opposition to gender policies in education by policy makers would enable more effective strategies to be implemented. Priority setting is of central importance.

Another key lesson is that broad based community involvement is essential if the social and political constraints are to be properly addressed. Experiences in South Asia, (the Lock Jumbish project in Rajistan, India, is an excellent example), have demonstrated that significant improvements in educational outcomes for girls are only possible if these projects and other interventions are truly 'owned' and managed by the communities they serve. NGOs have invariably been more effective than state bureaucracies in delivering education that is responsive to the needs of communities. 'Involving the community' has recently become a central theme in some projects in SSA (notably Malawi) that seek to reduce or eliminate gender inequalities in education. If the intention is to empower women, it is clear that there must be affirmative action at all political levels in order to enable their full participation.

The present preoccupation of most aid donors with increasing primary enrolments of girls has tended to marginalise adult education aimed at women in all three countries. If women are to participate fully in decisions affecting their lives they will need to be literate. Consequently, it is essential that appropriate non-formal education programmes for women are supported by both governments and donors.

CHAPTER 8

RESEARCH PRIORITIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 Research Priorities

Further, clearly focused empirical research is urgently needed in the following areas:

- The reasons for the better performance of girls at single sex schools.
- The impact of the streaming of girls and boys for different subjects at both primary and secondary levels.
- The extent of gender bias in curriculum and text books.
- The impact of female teachers and head teachers on school efficiency and academic performance of girls and boys in schools.
- The gender content of teacher training programmes.
- The impact of teacher pedagogy on male and female students.
- Regional disparities in educational provision and performance of both male and female students.
- The quality of education over time in particular in key subjects.
- The reasons for male and female drop out based mainly on interviews with teachers, parents and students.
- The patterns of attendance (rather than beginning of year enrolment figures) of girls and boys at both rural and urban schools.
- The potential obstacles which could hinder the implementation of gender policies and programmes in education.
- The relationship between schooling and the job market and how this affects girls in particular.

8. 2. Policy Recommendations

The following recommendations for BDDCA refer to measures that can be taken by donors and/or governments. Those which involve legislation can be supported in principle by donors. There are two main types of recommendations: school based and community based. It is not possible to prioritise these because gender strategies are specific to the country context.

8.2.1. School Based:

- There should be considerably more women teachers in both primary and secondary schools especially for maths and science.
- Incentives and/or subsidies should be offered to women teachers to take up positions in rural areas.
- Gender training should be provided for teachers, headteachers and educational administrators. This would involve retraining of staff in post as well as students in training.

- Fee waivers for girls at secondary school should be considered.
- Affirmative action should rigorously be applied to all ODA funded secondary and tertiary education scholarship schemes (both abroad and in-country) and the goal should be a ratio of male to female students of 50:50.
- Scholarship programmes should particularly target girls who wish to study in maths, science and 'non-traditional' vocational subjects such as engineering and medicine.
- In vocational training institutions, girls who wish to follow previously male dominated courses such as metal and woodworking should be provided with bursaries (if appropriate) as well as academic support and, if necessary, job placement.
- Strategies to support girls in maths and science in particular at both primary and secondary levels should be developed. This would involve streaming by sex and the special training of teachers to raise their awareness of gender issues.
- Gender bias should be eliminated in both curriculum and textbooks as soon as possible.
- Positive attitudes towards girls should be stressed in the design and implementation of all training programmes for teachers, school inspectors and administrators.
- Provision of guidance counselling for girls in schools could be improved with particular emphasis on raising their confidence generally and encouraging them to consider 'non-traditional career paths.
- School transportation schemes should be organised in rural areas where distances between home and school are great.
- Strict codes should apply to teachers with regard to sexual harassment and teenage pregnancy and these should be rigorously enforced.

8.2.2. Community based

- The formation of womens' groups should be encouraged and supported.
- In Malawi, the ODA should consider incorporating an adult education component into the CSP aimed particularly at raising the consciousness and political awareness of women through the development of literacy. The precise nature of this programme would be determined by the communities themselves.
- Adult education programmes should introduce income generating elements if considered necessary and appropriate by the communities.
- The encouragement of a more literate environment through the provision of newsletters, books etc. would help to encourage both adults and children to value education.
- Gender should be part of the training courses offered to those involved in school committees.
- Participatory techniques should be used to elicit community participation in the building of new schools.

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Table 1: Public Current Expenditure Per Pupil *(const. $US)*

	PRIMARY				SECONDARY				TERTIARY			
	1970	1980	1985	1990	1970	1980	1985	1990	1970	1980	1985	1990
Zimbabwe	66	143	118	126	708	761	240	233	1323	2398	1138	806
Malawi	31	16	17	15	602	289	228	192	3399	2973	2297	1782
Zambia	62	56	42	16	528	321	254	138	8896	3084	2665	865

Note: Total public expenditure on education includes both capital and recurrent expenditure for all administrative levels expressed in constant US dollars.

Source: GNP data from World Bank and total government expenditure from UNESCO

75

Table 1a: Total Public Expenditure on Education as a Percentage of Government Expenditure and GNP

	Total Government Expenditure				GNP			
	1970	1980	1985	1990	1970	1980	1985	1990
Zimbabwe	16.1	13.7	16.0	-	3.4	6.6	8.9	11.4
Malawi	13.2	8.4	9.6	10.3	4.6	3.4	3.5	3.4
Zambia	9.0	7.6	13.4	8.7	4.5	4.5	4.6	2.9

Note: Total public expenditure on education includes both capital and recurrent expenditure for all administrative levels expressed in constant US dollars.

Source: GNP data from World Bank and total government expenditure from UNESCO

Table 2: Total Gross Enrolment Ratio *(GER)*

(Primary and Secondary)

	1970		1980		1985		1990	
Countries	P	S	P	S	P	S	P	S
Zimbabwe	70	7.5	85	7.7	136	41.5	116	50.0
Malawi	36	1.9	60	3.5	60	4.1	69	3.9
Mozambique	40	4.1	99	5.2	87	7.3	66	7.6
Zambia	90	12.8	90	16.1	100	18.0	92	21.3

Source: DAE, 1994, using World Bank sources

Table 2a Gap Between Male and Female GER *(Primary)*

Countries	1970	1980	1985	1990
Zimbabwe	15	13	9	1
Malawi	20	24	16	14
Mozambique	26	30	22	19
Zambia	19	16	13	7

Table 2b Gap Between Male and Female GER *(Secondary)*

Countries	1970	1980	1985	1990
Zimbabwe	3.3	2.4	16.4	7.7
Malawi	2.0	3.2	3.2	1.3
Mozambique	2.1	4.8	5.5	4.2
Zambia	8.9	11.0	10.4	11.4

Source: DAE, 1994, using World Bank sources

Table 3: Primary Enrolment

	Total (thousands)				Females as a percentage of total			
	1970	1980	1985	1990	1970	1980	1985	1990
Malawi	363	810	943	1461	37	41	43	45
Zambia	695	1042	1348	1461	44	47	47	48
Zimbabwe	736	1235	2215	2116	45	47	48	50

Source: DAE, 1994 using World Bank sources

Table 3a: Secondary Enrolment

	Total (thousands)				Females as a percentage of total			
	1970	1980	1985	1990	1970	1980	1985	1990
Malawi	11	19	26	31	26	28	32	34
Zambia	56	102	141	195	33	35	37	37
Zimbabwe	50	75	482	672	39	42	40	46

Source: DAE, 1994 using World Bank sources

Table 4: Tertiary Enrolment

	Total (thousands)				Females as a percentage of total			
	1970	1980	1985	1990	1970	1980	1985	1990
Malawi	2.0	3.5	3.9	6.7	31	31	29	24
Zambia	1.4	7.5	8.8	15.3	15	24	22	28
Zimbabwe	5.0	8.3	30.8	49.4	42	42	31	27

Source: DAE, 1994 using World Bank sources

Table 5: Adult Literacy Rates *(in percentages)*

	TOTAL			FEMALE		
	1980	1985	1990	1980	1985	1990
Malawi	22.0	22.5	29.3	12.0	12.3	17.7
Zambia	61.1	67.4	72.8	51.2	58.7	65.3
Zimbabwe	57.2	62.3	66.9	49.0	55.0	60.3

Note: The adult literacy rate here is the percentage of persons aged 15 years and over who can read and write.

Source: UNDP, 1993 Human Development Report supplemented by UNESCO data.

92

Table 6: Women's Labour Force Participation (numbers and percentages)

	Agriculture *(thousands)*		Manufacturing *(thousands)*		Community *(thousands)*		All *(thousands)*	
Country	Total Women	% Women	Total Women	% Women	Total Women	% Women	Total Women	% Women
Malawi (1991)	77.6		6.5		15.5		106.5	17.9
Zambia (1986)		NA		NA		NA	98.5	16.1
Zimbabwe (1993)	10.0		13.0		98.7		223.8	19.4

Source: International Labour Organisation (ILO)

Table 7a:

Numbers of Teachers *(thousands)*

	Primary			Secondary		
	1980	1985	1990	1980	1985	1990
Malawi	12.5	15.4	22.7	0.9	1.2	1.2
Zambia	21.5	27.3	33.2	4.9	6.7	8.5
Zimbabwe	28.1	56.1	59.2	3.8	17.3	25.0

7b: Percentage of Female Teachers in Primary and Secondary *(%)*

	Primary			Secondary		
	1980	1985	1990	1980	1985	1990
Malawi	27	33	34	-	-	-
Zambia	40	43	45	-	23	-
Zimbabwe	35	43	39	37	30	29

Source: DAE, 1994 using World Bank sources

ANNEX 1:

PROJECT TERMS OF REFERENCE

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR CONSULTANCY TO UNDERTAKE A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE ON INTERVENTIONS TO ADDRESS THE CONSTRAINTS TO GIRLS' ACCESS AND PERFORMANCE IN SCHOOLS RELEVANT TO THE BDDCA REGION.

1. Introduction

ODA proposes to finance a consultancy to review the literature on interventions to address the constraints to girls' access, continuation and successful performance within the education system in the BDDCA region (Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe).

2. Objectives

The objectives are:

(i) To assist BDDCA to design and implement effective gender strategies in current education projects aimed at reducing gender inequalities and improving the access continuation and performance of girls in schools.
(ii) To provide information that will inform the design of future projects or interventions to address the problems of gender inequalities in the education systems within the region.

3. Project Background

One of the major constraints to overall successful completion of a full cycle of primary education by children is the fact that girls are under-represented in the school population and are also underachieving. This is particularly apparent in Malawi, where ODA is about to embark on a large primary school project to build, develop and support 100 community schools. Gender inequalities within the education system, however, are not confined to Malawi or to the primary sector. Girls face similar problems in Zimbabwe, Zambia and Mozambique. There have also been attempts to address some of these problems in various countries in the region. The similarities and differences within the region may be indicative of the nature of the problem and the extent to which it can be redressed. The documented results of attempts to redress gender inequalities in education may be particularly instructive. Girls make up at least 50% of the eligible school population. The quality and effectiveness of education in general could be improved if we could identify the reasons why girls fail and the strategies which education authorities can employ to improve their attendance and performance.

4. Terms of Reference

The consultant will -

i. Identify and summarise references that outline the extent and nature of the gender disparities in the BDDCA region's education systems.

ii. Describe and discuss references that document the impact of policies and interventions to address gender disparities within education.

iii. Assess the replicability of findings that document successful economic and educational policies and practices.

iv. Identify individuals with experience of successfully implementing strategies to address gender inequalities in education within the region.

v. Make recommendations on strategies and interventions that could potentially address gender inequalities in education.

5. Programme

The Consultant will have relevant background knowledge, skills, and analytic capacity. S/he will have 30 days to prepare and present a review of the relevant literature in a report to the Senior Education Adviser and the Social Development Adviser in BDDCA.